This Month:

IGNAZIO SILONE, the most famous literary exile from fascist Italy, is the author of *Fontamara* and *Mr. Aristotle. Two Syllables* is a chapter from his forthcoming novel, *Bread and Wine,* to be published by Harpers.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER edited *An Eighteenth Century Miscellany* and *An Anthology of Light Verse.* He is one of the leading reviewers of current literature in metropolitan publications.

MAX BRAUNSCHWEIG is a German Marxist at present living in exile. The translation is by Harold Rosenberg.

JOSEPHINE HERBST's most recent novel, *The Executioner Waits,* is the second volume of a trilogy she is now completing. She is also preparing a volume of short stories for early publication.

HORACE GREGORY's volumes of poetry include *Chelsea Rooming House, No Retreat,* and *Chorus for Survival.* His poem in this issue is the first section of a new work. A book of criticism, tentatively entitled *Firebrands of Literature,* is announced for early publication by Covici, Friede.

JAMES T. FARRELL was the only novelist *The Nation* included in its Honor Roll for 1936. His recent book, *A Note on Literary Criticism,* reviewed in our June issue, has aroused widespread controversy in left-wing magazines. His story in this issue is a selection from his new novel, *A World I Never Made,* that Vanguard Press will publish this month.

STERLING A. BROWN, one of the leading Negro poets in America, is the author of a volume of verse called *Southern Road.*

HAROLD ROSENBERG has contributed poetry and critical pieces to many advance-guard periodicals.

AGNES SMEDLEY's sketches of Chinese life in *Chinese Destinies* and *China's Red Army Marches* have been translated into many languages. Her autobiographical novel, *Daughter of Earth,* has recently been published in a new edition with an introduction by Malcolm Cowley.

JOSEPH BRIDGES has published poems and articles in the *New Masses, New Campus,* and other magazines. He lives in New York City.

IN COMING ISSUES:

THE POET OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY, an essay on Walt Whitman by *D. S. Mirsky,* translated by *Samuel Putnam.*

DIE AND LET LIVE, a short story by *Robert Meltzer.*

LAND WHERE MY FATHER DIED, a short story by *Arnold Manoff.*

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Designed by ROBERT JOSEPHY

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Partisan Review
COMBINED WITH THE ANVIL

OCTOBER
1936

Two Syllables

IGNAZIO SILONE

IN THE banquet hall and on the steps of the inn, men and youths are going ceaselessly back and forth. One group, wearing the Fascist Party emblem, is seated at a table and discussing, in voices that are already hoarse from too much talking, the details of the spontaneous and enthusiastic demonstration which is to take place this afternoon. It is a question, through stern and strict measures, of assuring the spontaneous and enthusiastic participation of the entire population of Fossa and vicinity.

"Should we send trucks to Pietrasecca, too?" some one asks.

"Sure, to Pietrasecca, too," someone answers him. "And we must send carabinieri along with them, so that the population will understand that they are to come in spontaneously."

At another table, a group of pot-bellies, under the artistic direction of Lawyer Zabaglione, are unctuously going over the bill-of-fare for the banquet this evening. Zabaglione is so flurried that he does not notice Don Paolo's presence.* A strenuous and basic difference of opinion has arisen, and Zabaglione finally and impulsively brings it down to a personal issue.

"On my word of honor," he shouts, "on the honor of my wife and the stainless honor of my daughter, I swear to you that I will have nothing to do with the banquet, if the white wine is to be served before the red."

"That's blackmail!" shout the other members of the committee, in high dudgeon. Zabaglione folds his arms and remains unshaken in his contention.

"Principles are principles!" is the only answer he will give.

Up on the second floor, in the landlady's bedroom, the recruiting commitee is meeting. Those who have not been able to find chairs are seated or lying on the widow's bed. The pillow slips are neatly embroidered in cross-stitch with the words, "Pleasant Dreams!" Over the bed hangs a colored print showing a guardian angel in the act of caressing a dove.

In Fossa, the mobilization of the hungry bums has been followed by that of the bankrupts. The directors of the Bank of Fossa, who are facing a suit for fraudulent bankruptcy, have volunteered to go to Africa. Their patriotic example has had its effect on all sides. The hardware merchant, who has a little shop on the Town Hall Square opposite the Girasole Inn, and who has had to close it for insolvency, has opened it again this morning, has put Gelsomina, his wife, in charge, and has pasted on the door a sign reading: "Creditors are hereby informed that the owner of this business has enlisted as a volunteer!" And no constituted authority would venture to order the seizure of a war hero's wares . . . . . .

The registration official, having read through the list of recruits, is led to exclaim: "This seems to be a mortgagors' war!"

The nearer the hour draws for the radio announcement of the declaration of war, the denser becomes the jostling crowd in the street. From the right hand side come the authorities, from the left the cafoni. From the right come motorcycles and autos, bearing police, carabinieri and militiamen, with officials of the Fascist Party and the Corporations on trucks. From the left, donkeys, bicycles and more trucks, bringing the peasants. Two blaring bands go up and down the street, playing the same hymn over and over again. The musicians are for the most part artisans, and are clad in the uniforms of circus animal trainers and hotel porters, with fancy stripes and a double row of brass buttons down the front. Outside a barber shop is a picture of Abyssinian women with long breasts dangling to their knees. Gathered around this picture is a large cluster of young lads, who eye it laughingly and covetously. From the left, the cafoni keep pouring in: small landowners, charcoal-burners and shepherds from round about. From the right hand side, the stream of Fascist Party representatives is likewise an uninterrupted one.

In back of the small square, between the Party headquarters and the colonnade of the Town Hall, a radio loudspeaker, decked with an array of small flags, has been set up. Down beneath the diminutive but miraculous object upon which the fate of a nation depends, the poor people take their places as they arrive. The women squat down as they do in church, while the men in the market place are seated upon sacks or upon the pack-saddles of their donkeys. All know why it is they have come together here, and they now sit blinking at the little mechanical object which is soon to resound with the call to arms; but they all feel rather out of place in its presence; they feel downcast and distrustful. The square and the neighboring streets are soon

* Don Paolo is the revolutionist hero, disguised in priest's garb.

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packed and jammed with humanity, as the silent, unbroken influx shows no signs of letting up.

This is the general mobilization of the hungry populace. There come the lame from the stone quarries, the blind from the blast furnaces, the bent and emaciated tillers of the soil, men from the hills with hands reddened by sulphur and lime, mountaineers with legs crooked from the mowing. Inasmuch as his neighbor was coming, every man has had to come. If war brings misfortune, it will be a misfortune for all, and not just for a few. If it brings luck, then one must go after it, so as to be in on it. And so, they have all set out; they have let the treading of the grapes, the cleaning of the vats and the preparation of the seed corn go, and have made their way to the provincial seat. The inhabitants of Pietrasecca also arrive, and dismount in front of the Girasole Inn. The school teacher explains to each one, repeatedly, just how he is to behave, just when he is to shout and when he is to sing; but her voice is lost in the universal hubbub.

From the left hand side, more cafoni are to be seen coming from the outlying villages. Shepherds in goatskin breeches, with sandals on their feet and gold earrings. From the right comes Don Concettino Ragù in a militia officer's uniform.

Don Paolo sees him and steps back into the room, in order not to run the risk of being recognized by his former school fellow. He takes up a position behind the window curtain on the second floor of the Inn, so that he may be able to observe the throng and the progress of the ceremony. He is reminded of the time when he was a child and had similarly stood at a window while the street down below swarmed with a long procession of ragged pilgrims singing litanies in honor of the Virgin Mary. The pilgrims came from far and were bound for far; most of them were barefoot and bore the stains of dust and perspiration. He remembers yet the feeling of oppression and of horror which this saddening spectacle inspired in his childish heart. Viewed from a second story window, the throng below, gathered about the loudspeaker, reminds him of a concourse of weary and oppressed pilgrims about a wonder-working idol.

From his hiding place, over the roofs of the houses below, Don Paolo can glimpse two or three bell towers as thickly dotted with young lads as a dovecot with doves. Of a sudden, the bells begin to peal. Through the crowd go members of the Fascist Party, bedecking the loudspeaker with patriotic fetishes in the form of tricolored flags, black pennants and a picture of the great Duce with the strong protruding lower jaw. Barbaric cries of "Eja! Eja!" devoid of all understandable meaning are now raised by Party members, while the throng maintains a persistent silence.

In front of the loudspeaker room is made for the "Mothers of the Fallen," poor old ladies who for fifteen years have been wearing mourning set off with medals, and who in return for their small gratuity are required, whenever the Department of Propaganda calls upon them to do so, to place themselves at the disposition of the Sergeant of Carabinieri. Behind the "Mothers" the priests of nearby parishes take their places, jolly-looking old priests, gloomy-looking priests, athletic and respect-inspiring priests, and a canon as fat and rosy as a well fed wet nurse—he is conversing with Don Girasole, the owner of the Inn. Under the loggia of the Town Hall, a few proprietors appear, with bristling beards, unprepossessing eyebrows and clad in velvet hunting jackets. The authorities, that is to say, the members of the Fascist Party, are standing in the middle of the square. In their midst is a solitary woman, Donna Evangelina, with her husband, the carpenter, whom she has compelled to volunteer.

"She has not only found a father for her child," one of the girls remarks, "but what a father! A hero!"

"Donna Evangelina is a born war widow," comments one of the men. "When she's able to wear mourning and a medal on her bosom, she'll be happy."

The bells peal forth as the lads tug on the ropes. A sign is given them to stop, that they may not drown out the impending radio broadcast; but they either do not understand, or pretend that they do not. There must be a dozen of them altogether, ringing the bells with all their might and filling the streets below with a lusty din. Militiamen appear upon the neighboring belfry and order the youths to cease; but as soon as they have gone down again and the lads perceive that the other bells are still pealing, they, not wishing to be outdone, start up once more.

The first raucous tones from the loudspeaker got out over the heads of the crowd, unheard. From the groups of carabinieri, militiamen and Party members there goes up a mighty cry, a rhythmic cry, a passionate exorcism addressed to the great Duce:

Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du!

The cry spreads, is taken up by the women and answered by the children and then by the entire multitude, even by those standing on the outskirts of the throng and by the onlookers in the windows, a solemn rhythmic chorus:

Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du!

That name which no one in private life would presume to utter, either by way of praise or imprecation, lest it bring bad luck, is now in the presence of his picture which they view with timidity, in the presence of this fetish of the fatherland, taken up and shouted time and time again, at the tops of their lungs, like a formula for warding off evil, in a religious frenzy:

Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du!

In the vicinity of the loudspeaker, an effort is

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made to get the crowd to be silent so that the speech coming from Rome may be heard; but those in the adjoining streets still go on scanning the mystic formula, continuing to call upon the great Duce, the Sorcerer, the Wizard, in whose hands lie the future and the very life-blood of the poor.

The shouts of the throng together with the pealing of the bells make it impossible for Don Paolo to catch any of the radio address. Down below, at one corner of the Inn, he sees the women from Pietrasecca squatting on the ground and the men grouped about a cart; they with the rest of the crowd are shouting those conjuror's syllables:

Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du!

Upon the cart, towering above the throng, sits a witch staring up at the sky. Her lips move back and forth and her gloom-laden face holds mysterious presentiments. The exorcism grows louder and louder until it becomes a deafening roar, a fanatic ecstasy, an oppressive obsession:

Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du!

The multitude is chanting now, including those up near the loudspeaker, the carabinieri and officials. The latter have become convinced that it is out of the question to hear anything of the broadcast from Rome. The cry, *Ce du! Ce du!* goes on hammering the air with its measured beat, with the continuity and the verbal intonations of a mass of sinners beseeching an angry god for grace and forgiveness. The two syllables end by losing all normal and comprehensible significance and become no more than a mysterious formula, mingling with the holy chime of the bells.

From his post of observation behind the window curtain, Don Paolo gazes down mournfully. He remembers the feeling of anxiety he had when as a boy he once witnessed certain experiments in mass hypnotism. He remembers having the same feeling whenever he has viewed demonstrations of those primitive and irrational psychic forces which lie slumbering in the individual and in the masses. How can one ever hope to talk reasonably to these poor creatures who have come under the influence of a hypnotizing wizard?

Those standing near the radio now give the sign that the broadcast is at an end.

"War has been declared!" shouts Lawyer Zabaglione, and raises a hand to indicate that he has something to say. But his voice, hoarse like the rest, is lost in the rhythmic chant the wailing echoes of which are still to be heard:

Ce du! Ce du! Ce du! Ce du!

The radio is silent, and no one has understood so much as three words of what has come over it. No one has taken the trouble to understand. No one is sorry at not having understood. For it is not necessary to understand; and what is more, there is nothing to be understood.

Translated from the Italian by Samuel Putnam.

Criticism In Transition

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

CRITICISM is constantly thwarted in its aspiration to create absolutes. The point is not exactly that there are no fixed values, but rather that they lend themselves to no fixed applications; so that the "best" critic—the critic least influenced by personal, temporal and extrinsic concerns—may seem at crucial moments to live in a vacuum. The truths that he and his kind have wrested from a refractory world may prove of immense value in furnishing us with a background, but the battle near at hand will almost surely be waged over issues more immediate and unresolved. The Bible for any one generation will almost never be the Bible itself. The most useful critic will be something else as well—some one who moves with the tides of his age. During one period he will bring to his criticism the attitude of a scientist, during another the attitude of a prophet, during a third the attitude of a man of action. Or he may display more than one of these attitudes, or some other attitude; the point is that the approach to truth does not admit of a constant, and that the roots of culture lie in a soil of shifting elements. In other words, if the critic truly values his ideals, he must be a realist in seeking to obtain them; and art is perhaps not so much hostile to propaganda as dependent upon it.

What distinguishes literary criticism today is that it is under tremendous pressure from life, and cannot remain isolated whether is wishes to or not. Social consciousness in the contemporary critic is not simply one of the tools of his trade, one of the avenues of his knowledge, but the inescapable galvanizer of his thought. The world is not just too much, but *always*, with us; and so vital a fact is changing the face of literature. From the time of the French Revolution until only a few years ago, creative writing largely represented the struggle between the individual and society; and since it was portrayed under the auspices of the democratic ideal, which means a period of growing freedom and scope for the individual, it was upon the individual in a very personal sense that the emphasis of the struggle rested. In romantic literature he might be the hero of some Icarian quest and failure; in realistic literature he was more likely the pigmy doomed in advance to annihilation. Yet, despite nineteenth-century interest in social problems, whenever Society became the antagonist in fiction, it assumed for critics hardly more than a vague symbolic character. A Balzac hero or a Julien Sorel was

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regarded in going down to defeat, much as Oedipus or Macbeth was regarded: you put a strong personality through the wringer of society and then ambiguously labeled the process 'destiny' or 'fate.' The concept of classical tragedy remained in force.

Julien Sorel, surely, is the ancestor of the fiction of the past hundred years; and because, owing to his influence, most novelists have undertaken to study human character in terms of complex psychology and emotions, we have come to suppose that such a study is the function of fiction at its best. Taking the long view, I should far from disagree; nor will I deny that until recently any other view would have been regarded as nonsense. We have only to recall how most of us first reacted to *A la recherche du temps perdu,* in which the nineteenth-century tradition of the novel culminates. A dozen years ago Proust's demonstration of a disintegrating world, as compared with his molding of character, his inquest upon the sensibilities and his depiction of manners, was thought of as secondary; most of us read the work with no more or less social consciousness than we would have studied the declining years of the Roman Empire, or the *ancien régime* in eighteenth-century France. We noted, of course, the disintegration, we saw the causation behind it; but primarily we surveyed the last flare of nineteenth-century genius through the eyes of nineteenth-century criticism. Some of us today may too far bend Proust to a thesis, but almost nobody can now read him as almost everybody then did. The same thing applies to Henry James and others.

The decisive growth, during the past few years, of a predominantly social literature and criticism—of which strictly proletarian literature and strictly Marxist criticism form a great part but not the whole—reflects far more than a newsgatherer's awareness of the disorder of our times. For not only has the writer, as writer, been curious and investigative of what goes on around him; also the values, formerly distinguishable, by which he once lived as private individual, as writer, and as citizen, have tended more and more to coincide. In the old writer with a purely subjective morality, matters were oftenest just the opposite: he was likely to repent in literature for sinning in life, and to make of his art a constant compensation for his character. A Dostoevsky or Baudelaire finds the moral dichotomy between what he is and what he aspires to be the very breath of his inspiration, the very secret of his intensity. But the social-minded writer today, confused and lacking in inner unity though he often is, does tend increasingly to act and write on the same plane, aware that his actions and his writings have behind them, not only the same social impulse, but the same social pressure. It is not only a question of values—that when society is in crisis a man's personal crisis should wait; it is equally a question of sense—that man's private solution may prove utterly worthless if it conflicts with the social solution when it comes. But there can be no doubt that the moral issue involved is more important than the practical one. To withdraw into a shell, no matter how austerely, is not at this juncture a maintenance of high values, but merely a pretense of maintaining them. During a period so overwhelmed by threats of war, fascism, unstabilized markets, unemployment, labor difficulties, curtailed freedom of speech and so much else resulting from the interaction of these forces, any attempt at aloofness becomes irresponsible: for progress now is not only impeded by stupidity, but mortally threatened by malevolence. Olympianism and the long view can serve us today only by acting as a brake, not against action itself, but against undisciplined and over-hasty action; today's critic is bound to be chiefly a fighter; today's criticism must be—and in culture's behalf must be—chiefly in the nature of pamphleteering.

For, however well it may chime in with Marxism, social literature is all the same much more than a plot hatched to spread the gospel; it overwhelmingly expresses, quite as much as Rousseauism or the idea of democracy or any other thing ever did, the time-spirit. Neither is it a plot to dethrone all we have held sacred and even self-evident in literary tradition; the subject-matter must simply, given time, evolve its corresponding esthetic. After all, literature is a history of patterns and symbolisms founded upon man's approach to living. The gods who fertilized Greek literature perished when they ceased to be a viable concept; the Church, which for centuries inoculated literature, has lost almost all the power it had formerly to nourish art. In the same manner Chivalry went under as a mobilizing force, and so, except when used half-ironically, did the Aristocratic Ideal. The Individual, as master or victim of his own philosophy, has been the last of the great concepts to dominate creative literature; and it too may, for a time or just possibly for all time, have lost its urgency. (It is worth noting that it alone of the great concepts has been, at bottom, anti-social.) At any rate if the protagonist of present-day literature has become Society itself, whether represented overtly in the class struggle, or more ambiguously as a vulnerable and changing organism, there is nothing either perverse or ill-founded about its sovereignty. Literature must go where life goes; and whether it makes for better or worse art, today the fate of men consumes our interest more than the fate of man.

Let us make no bones about the fact that it is impossible to write, or to write about, social literature without taking sides. This may seem to impose upon both novelist and critic a propagandist role wholly out of keeping with our traditional conception of the artist's stance. To a great extent, however, the confusion is verbalistic. To me it seems a truism, though to others (thinking, perhaps, of such a writer as

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Shakespeare) it may seem untrue, that almost all great art is a dramatization of the artist's values. When the artist does not live under great pressure from outside, these values may safely (though not too wisely) float in an atmosphere of speculation and theory. But during any period of stress, art by not taking sides must inevitably serve the side it less honors; and the artist, far from asserting his values, parts with them. Surely no one will state that the artist should be impartial: indeed, he must *not* be impartial in exactly the same sense that he *must* be disinterested. Thus those largely unsocial-minded people who groan that the age of the machine has killed men's souls, would do better to stop weeping over the corpse and turn a sharp eye on the murderer. Our social consciousness, for the moment, must replace our souls—the more so if we ever hope to get them back again.

All this is not to argue that because Society itself has become, both critically and creatively, the major concern of literature in our time, it has so far either critically or creatively yielded up much fruit. So far, we all know, there has been too much sectarianism, too much hysteria, too much bad blood and wasted heat and guerrilla warfare, too much propaganda seeking to exploit art rather than direct and stimulate it. Most important of all, whether literature means to acquire or impose values, it must remain realistic: it cannot indulge in wish-fulfillments or juggle facts. Neither can literature hope to be all things to all men. The writer or critic who aims at simultaneously communicating on several planes is doomed to waste his ammunition; a writer must not only know what he wants to say, but to whom he wants to say it. So far, social literature has thrown off too much heat in the writing still to retain very much in the reading; so far the imagination has been trapped by over-simplified symbolisms in subject-matter; so far the preservative qualities of irony—which I need hardly say has nothing to do with writing in an ironic style or tone—have been too greatly lacking. In our search for orientation we must guard heavily against these defects, and know just how far we can trust any novelist or critic to lead us. But if, in a different spirit, we put our backs up, we are no longer discounting the writers, we are discounting what they represent. There is really no fundamental dilemma: it is more necessary to interest ourselves in an important subject treated without much merit than in an unimportant subject treated with considerable merit. *Culture herself* demands that we put the right social values ahead of the right literary values; and whenever we encounter people who want to keep art dustproof, who bewail the collapse of 'esthetic values,' it is our duty to ascertain just how far their indignation is a screen for reactionary and unsocial thinking.

The obverse of this—which is the cultural coarsening inevitable to a period of stress—is on the other hand a very serious problem for the critic. As men of thought tend increasingly to approximate the psychology of men of action; as the business of saving civilization increasingly ousts from their minds the idea of enriching it, there must follow all along the line a relaxation of standards, both ethical and esthetic. The amenities decline, the non-utilitarian aspects of culture decrease, tolerance ceases to be feasible, and reason to be altogether sufficient. It is less important that the search for truth should survive than that the cancers of society should be cut out; but it is important enough. The critic therefore must act with a full sense of authority and responsibility toward what, when the crisis is over, we shall want to come back to; culture of that kind is like a cathedral where, just now, we cannot often pray but which we must preserve from bombardment. And culture of that kind has its uses in any program of protest. It must not stop men from fighting to restore order to the world, but it may give them a sense of what order signifies and stands for.

The Enemy

JOSEPHINE HERBST

THE ROAR of the explosion came in the middle half of the picture. It was an American film with inserts tagged on in Spanish and the American voices coming steadily from empty smiling faces not now distinctly heard were a long way off. A harsh smell of smoke stung the lazy cigarette bogged air. Several men in the back rows bolted up the dark aisle. Two from the front fumbling with pocket flashlights stumbled against one another and brushed by Mrs. Sidney as she started from the aisle seat.

"Senora, sit down," said a man rapidly thrusting his flashlight toward the American lady. She sat down. The picture went on in the dark house. American college kids played a ukelele and a big car bulging with boys in white pants and blazers and girls in fluffy dresses rolled before her eyes as incredible in the sudden tenseness of the picture house as Fiji Islanders dancing around a mess of cannibal flesh. She sat strained to the noises of the street, on edge, alert and waiting. A machine gun splattered into the boom of a second explosion and then the iron shutter at the entrance of the theater rang down with a loud chatter. People sat back in their seats stiffly as if an order had come for "Hands up." No one spoke. A single thin scream pierced the iron shutter and the frail building and then it was dead quiet.

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"What'll you gimme," said the American voice.

"What you got?"

"Got nothin' but luv," crooned the voice with ukeleles whanging a chorus.

A man got up and walked out rapidly holding his hat over his belly. Mrs. Sidney rose deliberately and went to the back of the theater. In the vestibule a dozen men stood quietly. They were smoking and looked at her curiously, at her American clothes and her eyes very blue in her tanned face. One of the men without smiling broke the intentness of his fixed gaze. She spoke to him. "What happened?"

"A bus blew up. Right outside. You can't go now."

"How?" said Mrs. Sidney taking a cigarette slowly from her pocketbook. The Cuban looked with admiration at the coldblooded American.

"A bomb," he said shrugging.

She put the cigarette in her mouth. "Allow me," he said graciously as if at a party. He flourished a nice nickle plated lighter. Mrs. Sidney moved her head politely and held it steadily.

"And the machine gun?"

"Police," he said suddenly sucking back the smile that had appeared faintly. "People killed?" she went on, looking at him. He nodded, staring hard, and she moved off carelessly as if humming a catchy tune. She did not dare ask who was in the bus, had strikers been killed by gun fire or were the scabs dead. She waited instead, walking aimlessly feeling the eyes envious and contemptuous of American tourists. Wheeling suddenly she caught them looking, brazenly friendly and wary. Inside the theater the American voices were again coming unmolested and banal from the screen. The heavy iron shutter rolled up. Creaking it rose and stuck half way above the now opened doorway. Mrs. Sidney went to the edge and looked out between the shoulders of two men. The street was completely empty. A little rain must have fallen. In other doorways iron curtains were raised or were raising and a very few people stood staring into the naked street. She did not see it at first and then she saw it. A pool of blood gummed the pavement in front of the theater. The wreck from the bus had been cleared away. Little pieces like bedraggeled confetti clotted the gutters.

Mrs. Sidney looked at her watch. Ten Forty-five. In a few minutes she must leave to be back at the hotel by eleven. "The man" might come. She thought of him as "the man" with the detachment of distrust just as she thought of those Cubans whom she had seen every day before her trip down the island as friends. The friends were now in jail or in hiding. She had no way to reach them or to learn what was going on anymore except through the man. To keep herself free and above suspicion she must continue to walk, to look aimless, to buy foolish souvenirs, stare at the capitol like a tourist and be indifferent to death.

The awaited moment had come. For two months she had been waiting. There had been time for doubt of her to wear thin. Both sides had been suspicious. The American officials had concluded she was O.K. A little sentimental about the poor and oppressed but then she was a woman with a woman's heart and the administration had no wish to antagonize such people. There were plenty of stinks on the island and the best way to act was to be open and frank and show the best side up. Her credentials were first rate, first rate papers. And her manners, perfectly respectable, clothes smart, really it was a pleasure to pass her on to the sugar crowd who liked to pretend their affairs were an open book.

The other side of the fence had not swallowed her so easily. Where was her money coming from? Still three pencilled lines drawn swiftly from the lining of her pocketbook quieted their doubts. Their proud doubting eyes had softened. Even if they were taking a chance, they must take it or die with their story untold. They thought of the great American cities, the United States gorged with fat, so near yet so far, the high buildings, millions of cars, swell clothes and factories. Useless to tell them that poverty numbed millions there, that factories idled. At evening along the sea wall, they sat, dozens of Cubans, feeling the narrow island press cruel as a cage upon their backs. As the boats glided through the narrow pass, they watched the gulls enviously, straining their eyes toward the mainland, the light on the waves dazzling them. To be away, to be free, to breathe without fear. If only the world rightly knew of their sorrows. They suffered the illusion that their griefs were unique, that no one had borne such trouble, that if the world knew, the end would come and a new day truly begin. They had a terribile respect for print and understood the lies of the island well. As for those papers that dared speak, they were soon silenced. Castor oil and guns worked here as in Italy. In dreams those Cubans saw their story liberated with all the elaborate Spanish turns of phrase, the indirectness that was oratory wasted, and they fancied that such long passionate pieces would appear in headlines in New York papers, that citizens riding in subways and great smoothly running cars would read, would freeze with horror, would immediately quit everything to telegraph, Stop, stop.

And underneath this phantasy that was widespread among Cubans who longed for liberation from their troubles, the hard heads that counted cynically on organization only to achieve their purpose allowed themselves to hoard a tiny hope that she might really stir up sympathy for their cause. They had suspicion of her respectability and respect for her credentials and they agreed, the realists, that she should be trusted and watched.

They had let her go down the island that had been turned into a long lush wasteland of pale green sugarcane, both crowds passing her from hand to

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hand. Managers from sugar plants had waited with cars to take her in the front door and show her around the elaborate factory where the sickly sweet pulp changed its hue from vat to vat. In the hot sweet air they smiled and bowed and she looked past their plump whitecoated shoulders through slits of windows to the green waving sea where the lumbering bull carts waited for the bent backs to load them.

She sat with them at luncheon in the dim cool dining room, the ice tinkling, the melons fragrant, the fish browned and delicate and the wine poured into colored goblets. Politely and skillfully they fenced back and forth, sizing each other up. At last truculent, impatient, the American spoke. "Listen here, Mrs. Sidney, with all due respect to our manager who is a Cuban, a lot of these people don't want things better. He'll tell you, isn't that so? Try to do things and see what thanks you get. I admit they live like pigs but my God what would they do if we weren't here to help them out? This island ain't the one sore spot in the world either. It's practically universal. Look at what you got at home. Why pick on us. What about the farmer in the states? Say, there's a problem, he's whining around and on his back. Want me to tell you why? For the same reason these babies are flat. Speculation. Why there's no bigger gambler in the world than the farmer. Makes Wall Street look like a piker. They were riding high right after the war, same as here. Then what did they do. They speculated. Bought land. Greedy and anxious to clean up and now they can't take it. Well we have to take it. We can't whine and crawl out of it. We have to stay right here, Johnny on the spot and keep going. If this New Deal keeps up with the strange hold it's got on business, I don't know where I'll be. I actually envy the man on relief, he hasn't got my troubles and he knows where he stands."

Mrs. Sidney looked at her plate, stirring her coffee. The Cuban manager now put in his oar. "We can't answer your questions. We're not seers, you know. The past is gone and who knows the future. Wages are, as I told you, set by law. Anything you want to know about sugar now," he smiled brightly, "Let's discuss sugar as sugar. Then we'll get somewhere."

Mrs. Sidney couldn't help herself, her hand shot out angrily and then caught her napkin and the thrust changed to a diplomatic gesture. She patted the napkin gently and forced the words to come mildly, "Sugar as sugar. A process. I'm afraid I haven't got a technical mind. I'm interested in what happens in making sugar and where it goes when it is made. The people who make it and eat it you know." The set faces glaring unfriendly and alien warned her. She put a smiling face on like a mask, turning soft and feminine. "I like people," she confessed in a little voice. "It's sometimes a limitation, don't you think?" At that the American allowed himself to smile broadly, he eased back in his chair, and the two managers looked at one another in a relieved and condescending manner.

Alone in the small bare hotel of the hot baked town she waited for evening. Her notebook filled with scraps of their conversation flatteringly interpreted in case someone should search her papers in her absence. She wrote with her head down, her eyes digging into the page, fiercely intent, not daring to give herself any thoughts but these. When night came, she followed the directions that had been given her in Havana by word of mouth, repeating them to herself as she hurried down the back street, past the gasoline station, turn to the right to the tobacco store, walk two doors further and enter a long hallway, knock on the door with the card tacked over the bell. The door opened and the circle of dark eyes, wary, suspicious, softened. She stepped in. Did she know Castello? What was he doing? What had he said? What were things like in the states? Then as each man took selfconsciously the offered American cigarettes, a door to a court opened and two men in white wrinkled workpants and no shirts came in, looking hard as if to discover whether or not this woman could help them, turning at last with backs bare and across the backs great broad flaming scars, the wounds of the machete.

All the way down the island managers of hotels obsequiously jerked out her chair from the best table but alone with waiters, as the fish was served, a scabby story of resented wrongs poured like a sauce over the food. At night after dinner the American lady tripped down the front steps as the lights went on under the palms of the little square, and strolling idly, suddenly disappeared down a steep street to one block south, two west, the archway with the iron grill, where young boys from the highschool waited in their white suits. Their dark faces melting in the darkness, their white suits came towards her touchingly headless, and she followed them to the home of the dead boy's mother. His bloody oncewhite suit sprawled empty and useless with the dried accusing stains upon his narrow bed. In the dim whitewashed room of the dead boy she had stared at the collapsed clothes. On the walls above the bed hung a crucifix and a picture cut from an illustrated paper of a young Russian girl laughing, holding in one arm a sheaf of wheat. She turned from the picture catching a quick flash in the eyes of the boy nearest her. Her knees felt shaky but she answered their eyes, the dead boy's mother and his alive companions, looking at them one by one, promising, reassuring their steady asking gaze with a promise, her lips dry, her eyes as burning as theirs.

Back in the big hotel the stink from the open sewers wafted up with the breath of the sea. Shots had begun in the night. When day came little school children marched through the filthy streets carrying placards scrawled in chalk. "We want pencils. We

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want water. We want books." Swiftly the strike had crawled over the back of the evil island, coiling in the deathly green of the ripening sickly sugar cane.

She had got to Havana just before the big busses quit running. At night "the man" had come with news of her friends. She looked at her watch again, stepped firmly under the edge of the iron shutter that hung like a blade above her. No one else moved. They were watching her now with speculative indifferent eyes. In the greenish reflection of a light a few doors away, faces were suety pale. Shots began somewhere in different points of the city. The rattle of a machine gun sounded in a nearby street. She stepped out and began walking, erect and leisurely, close to the houses that leaned together in the night away from her. Hugging the dark side of the street, she crossed the now empty streetcar tracks, in shadow reached the Cuban hotel. A little group cluttered the doorway.

"Senora," said the clerk pushing forward. "You shouldn't be out. Didn't you read the proclamations? It's dangerous. They're shooting."

The faces of the Cuban guests that had become familiar at mealtimes now appeared changed and distant. "Is it as bad as that?" said Mrs. Sidney in an unseemly gay voice feeling the disapproving eyes of the fat woman who sang in the vaudeville house on Sundays. Going up in the elevator the boy pointed to women gabbling together on the landings. "They afraid," he said using his bad student English proudly. "Won't go downstairs. You not afraid?" He arched his brows pleased with himself and anxious to identify his own braggadocio, the cover of his alarm, with her recklessness.

For the first time she realized that she was not really afraid and her lack of fear set her apart as if she had been a victim of leprosy. She took no pride in it. A sense of nerves crippled by personal disaster humbled her. The deadly blow had already fallen and she continued to live. The thoughts that were terrible as hopeless disease pounced down on her as she entered her own room. She stood with her back to the door, looking at the snapshot of her husband tucked in the mirror over the dresser. A sudden burst of firing in the street lit up the towers of a nearby hotel as if fireworks were going off on some holiday celebration. She began to change her clothes, hastening, the need to do something racing as with some impending disaster. The shots came rapidly from beneath her window but no one screamed. Explosions far off scattered into deadly quiet. The streetcars had stopped except for an occasional one run crazily by a frightened scab with guns of guards at his back. Her hands were shaking as she fumbled with the dresses in the wardrobe. The green silk Tom had bought her on their last time in New York together stuck to her fingers. There it hung mournfully like a headless woman. When a knock came, she stared stupidly. The little game she sometimes played with herself that Tom had come back to her reminded her only of her incompleteness. She said quietly, "Just a moment," and dressed.

The man came in jauntily dressed in a white suit that since he had known her was washed and pressed frequently. His homely face with the brush of moustache beamed with a too familiar intention. She tried to smile cordially, disliking him for reasons that she was ashamed of, his stiff hair and small eyes. She tried to tell herself that he was to be trusted, that the friends now in jail had trusted him, were trusting him, but a memory of an afternoon in the office of the paper now guarded by police diluted her tolerance. They had smiled with impatience at his impractical enthusiasm. On his part, distrust of her was coated with a fine appearance of amiability. He entered the room now as if she had been a mistress and a rather humble one.

Mrs. Sidney bore it quietly moving lightly away from him. The homely bed jutted out between them in the narrow room. He walked up and down bursting with importance and a pure impersonal joy that the strike was moving rapidly. His heedless optimism struck her as dangerous but she held her tongue. "Didn't I tell you?" he began. "What do you think now? No, you believed the embassy crowd. They knew better. Pretty good."

"I only said that they didn't believe a general strike could or would be pulled."

"Well this will show them. Did you see Murphy? Is he going to get you an interview with Bertolli?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Sidney. "Tomorrow. Today Bertolli is too tired. 'Poor Bertolli,' he said, 'he was up till four this morning'."

"He knows that. You see, they are working hand in glove."

"At first he wouldn't hear of it. Said the most important people couldn't see Bertolli. I said, look here I've got to get off this island and I can't go without an interview with Bertolli. I pretended I was getting nervous and wanted to get off the island. He almost shouted at me. 'You getting nervous,' he said. 'What about me? If I didn't hold to myself just like that, I'd go to pieces'."

"He said that?" The man was looking at her delightedly now and began to walk toward her. She backed away from him and picking up a brush off the dresser began brushing her short hair. Coming close to the mirror she took down the kodak picture and hid it under the dressercloth. "Oh yes," she went on talking fast. "He said he was nervous and he looked it. He was wearing a checked suit like a race track man and he had the nervous air of a man who thinks maybe he has put a big bet on the wrong horse and can't afford to lose. He asked how'd I like an interview with Mendoza? I said it was too late for Mendoza who had moreover been nothing but president and a tool. Also a fool. Murphy grinned

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and said 'fool and tool, quite a rhyme there,' and then he said that Mendoza was an honest man and that meant something in a place like Cuba. He seemed to be mulling over something in his mind and as I just kept on saying, a fool and a tool, he broke out with the fact that he was sore at Mendoza too, he was too slow and dumb and had I any idea what that man had wanted to do today of all days. He had wanted to go out to his chicken farm, mind you. I laughed and said looking straight at him, 'Well of course Mr. Murphy, there are only two people of any importance on this island, yourself and Bertolli.' He swelled up a little, then looked modest and said he guessed maybe I was right. I said that with a military dictator like Bertolli around there was naturally no place for a weakling like Mendoza. He caught me up on that. 'Don't call Bertolli that. And when you see him don't put such ideas into his head, he's got too many like that already.' Murphy didn't want any American putting ideas into Bertolli that might get him, Murphy, into a jam."

"The son of a bitch," said the man working his small moustache and walking nervously up and down. Mrs. Sidney had been sitting quietly on the edge of the bed. Her own narrative had steadied her again. With her contempt for Murphy the air in the room seemed to become purer. Where she was sitting she could see her own reflection in the mirror of the wardrobe and the wild idea that she could put on her hat, pack a bag, take an airplane and in twelve hours find Tom made her for the moment deaf and dumb.

"I said," the man was saying, "but you aren't listening, that you did a good job." He walked over to her and pinched her cheek. "What are you mooning about?"

"Nothing," said Mrs. Sidney.

"Well get a piece of paper and let's get the questions down that you're to ask Bertolli. I memorized them at the headquarters this afternoon when they asked me to come here. Can't trust anything in writing on me, I might get picked up."

She opened the drawer of the little desk and as if there was no escaping, the two cablegrams and Tom's letter in the well worn envelope stared at her. Mrs. Kate Sidney, Havana. When he had made trips away from her he used always to write Mrs. Thomas Sidney.

"Can't you find any paper?"

"Here's some," said Mrs. Sidney. She sat quietly watching his fingers trace the important words, trying to focus on the little strokes he was making so that she wouldn't have to listen to the hum of the letter she knew by heart. Shut in the drawer though it was, in its envelope, it had a body and life. It was an enemy, behind her and around her. "There's no need to see me. Amy and I love each other deeply. Don't try to rake over the dead ashes." It was useless to resurrect that other message, cabled two months earlier, I love you darling always will Tom. The tenderness of the one made the other all the more mysteriously inexplicable. Some terrible darkness had come over her own little world and there was no time even to understand it. She couldn't get on a train or take an airplane or run. She wasn't just a woman anymore. At that moment it seemed the most important thing in the world to be and she drooped in all her muscles with bewilderment at what seemed her fate. The old silly words to explain life were no good, and she seemed to be waiting in darkness.

"Here you are," he said. "Now try to find out something concrete about how he means to try to break the strike."

"I already told you. Force. Murphy kept saying that they would stop at nothing. Why you know yourself that they've got lousy barracks all over this island. The kids can't have schools but they've got barracks. There's no food but look at the soldiers in their brand new rain capes and yellow shoes. Then the United States gunboats. They aren't on deck now but what's to prevent them from quietly slithering into the harbor. It's been done you know. Remember the banana strike at Columbia? Jesus Christ, I think it's clear." She broke off, striking a match and puffing at a cigarette furiously. Walking over to the desk she slammed shut the drawer that was open a crack and stood looking down at it.

"Listen," said the man in a patronizing voice. "This strike has the island behind it. The strikers are prepared too. This is a strike of a high political order. A crisis. Trouble is, you're a bourgeois pessimist."

The word was too much. "Don't throw that word at me. Don't. I can't stand it. A goddamned label. When am I going to get rid ot it? What must I do?" She had her hands over her ears, looking at him furiously.

He backed away from her. "Don't get hysterical," he said. "What's come over you?" She pulled herself up and to keep from crying turned her back to him. When had she ever had any ease? All her life she had made her own way and making her own way had taken her from Tom. She had lost him, wasn't that enough? It wasn't his fault; even now, she was defending him as she always had, remembering the long rides in the country together, the meetings and then afterwards the winter nights, the reading and studying into sometimes morning until a light that was more than day seemed breaking. She and Tom had gone the same way together but some rotten link somewhere had broken. She hung her head and he came over toward her and patted her arm.

"O. K. I guess I'm tired," she said getting to her feet as she saw his intention to come closer to her dampen the smooth red skin of his forehead. The sharp little nose jutted out shiny from the determined cheeks. He reached toward her and she stifled

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the longing to push him rudely, smiled at him instead pitying his lonely desire. "Tomorrow then," she said gently.

"Tomorrow," he said, excited and tense. His longing for some small human gift kept him lingering. She tried to lean toward him but stiffened miserably and dug some cold cream out of the jar instead automatically rubbing it over her cheeks and lips. "Goodnight," she said, "And be careful of yourself."

Grateful at her concern he waved happily and went out. Alone she turned out the lights and gave in to exhaustion. She lay down in the darkness and tried hard to focus on the questions for the next day.

Tom was alive somewhere but he was not Tom anymore. All the clues to understanding him seemed lost and broken. Something that he called love had changed him so that the little baby picture she carried with her showing him with chubby hands staring solemnly at her was more like Tom than this new being who pushed her away without any need of her anymore. Her uselessness broke in sudden crying, she grasped frantically at the memory of the questions trying to focus on what she must say, the probable answers. The Spanish words slid away from her as if she were no longer to be trusted. Her plans for the next day deserted her as aloneness settled upon her like some doom.

The shooting had stopped and the early morning light came over the building opposite with a chilly freshness. Tom would be asleep now, his arms around this other woman as they used to lie listening to the early birds. The cardinal had been ruby red against the snow. In the morning they went out hand in hand to look at the garden. The peas grew an inch in the night. The tiger lily was opening with an orange heart. And sadly the eyes of the mother of the dead boy looked at her reproachfully. She kept her inner sight on those eyes, quieting gradually, lying still, her eyes looking down steadily at the mangled clothes of the dead boy. He had walked around and had laughed and it was he who had led the little band of high school boys on strike for more books, for water, for freedom and *more light*. Now she quit sobbing, ashamed of her tears and tried to think only of the dead boy who suddenly seemed to her alive and fresh and strangely familiar. Holding tightly to his young bruised hand, she clung to him desperately, as the sick and the injured cling to the well and the strong, and at last her breath came evenly as she shut her eyes and went to sleep.

The accumulation of accepted material during the summer made it necessary to eliminate the book-review section from this issue. Important fall books will be reviewed in the November number.

The Philosophic Thought of the Young Marx

MAX BRAUNSCHWEIG

It is not merely as an introduction to Marx's major work that the works of his youth are important. There is no doubt that a deep comprehension of *Capital* is impossible without discovering through the earlier works the road traversed by Marx in his manner of conceiving the social problem, the evolution of his terminology, and the development of his polemics. But the youthful works have an import which surpasses by far their value as preliminary studies: *they mark the passage between the old philosophy and the new,* they assign to Marxism its position in the history of ideas. Nowhere is seen more clearly that Marxism was not an "invention," but rather an organic and historically necessary development of European culture. Marx rests upon the great thinkers of the preceding epoch, and was but the continuator—a masterful continuator, moreover—of their work. It is very important to raise this point again. To consider Marxism as a specifically economic doctrine is to narrow it down and to falsify it. It is more than that: a method of thinking, a new aspect of culture in the largest sense, even if its practical consequences do make themselves felt primarily in the economic realm. The tangible proof of this extended meaning of Marxism is to be found precisely in the work of the young Marx. And the manuscripts of the year 1844, recently discovered, show perhaps most appropriately all the fullness of Marx's thinking.

Let us try to set in relief the principal ideas expressed in these *Manuscripts*.

The center of young Marx's reflections was neither economy nor social morality, but *man*: more precisely, his unnatural situation in actual society. Basically, it is the philosophic problem of the 18th century, and Marx can indeed be considered as the great continuator of French philosophy. But while the latter could only seek to resolve problems with the insufficient means of an idealistic philosophy, Marx, scarcely a century later, could find the solution, thanks to the powerful instrument of materialist dialectic.

Two great currents transmitted to Marx the impulsion given to thought by the 18th century philosophers: that of the French socialist writers of the 19th century (Saint-Simon, Fourier, and above all Sismondi), and that of the German philosophers of

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the 19th century (Hegel, Feuerbach). In uniting these two powerful currents, Marx summed up in himself a whole century of thought, at the same time that he represented the dawn of a new philosophic epoch.

It is man, then, who is at the foundation of Marx's considerations; and to be more precise: man "alienated from himself." This "alienation" (the term is acquired from Hegel and Feuerbach) is, according to Marx, one of the pillars of actual bourgeois society, the center, consequently, from which all his reflections will radiate. The man who works is a stranger to his labor; he performs it only with disgust; likewise, he is a stranger to the product of his toil, since this product belongs to another. And to this other also, to the owner, this product represents an indifferent thing, a commodity, that is, something which has value only because it can be exchanged for money. But the worker who feels his labor and the product of his labor to be something foreign to him, becomes also a stranger to himself. For work, that is to say, the productive transformation of the world, is part of the very essence of man. If man is prevented from working in a natural way, that is, from living naturally, he "alienates himself from himself," which means that he is no longer a man in the full sense of the word. His existence becomes to a certain extent animal, for he works only in obedience to constraint, to misery.

In affirming this alienation, in laying bare its terrible consequences, Marx arrived naturally at a second point: What is the relation of man to his work under natural conditions, non-capitalist conditions? It is extremely interesting to observe the attitude assumed by Marx towards the problem of work which has confronted the ethic of peoples for thousands of years. Work is for Marx "vital activity, productive life itself." This is true, of course, only of free and conscious labor, not of the forced and alienated labor of capitalist society. *This free labor is for Marx the true form of human existence.* The human factor of work consists in the fact that through work man transforms nature, transforms it for himself, that is, makes the world into his own world. In the beginning, the world is composed only of dead and indifferent things: man makes of it, through his labor, his world, his reality. Thus nature is found to be integrated in human life. Being the object upon which man accomplishes his work, it becomes part of his being. "Nature is the inorganic body of man," as Marx boldly put it. From dead stone, Michelangelo fashions with his chisel an expression of his being. In the same way, by means of all labor, nature becomes part of man, as man becomes part of nature. Each product of free labor incarnates the personality of man. And therefore, this work is a joy, since it is the expression of life. We all recognize it in the exceptional case of the artist, that is, the creative transformation of nature is, according to Marx, the attribute of every man who works, providing he has broken loose from the fetters of "alienation."

Further: since I do not produce for myself alone, but also for others (who need my product as I need theirs), work is also the true form of *social* activity; it is the intermediary between one man and another. It is through work that man comes to the realization that he is not isolated, that he is a social being. In each product he receives from another, he receives also part of the personality of the other. This idea is expressed in a very happy terminology in the "Remarks on James Mill": "Our productions are so many mirrors in which our being is reflected." This is, then, the Marxist conception of work: a tremendous enlarging of the human personality. The concepts "to work" and "to be a man" recover their meaning.

It is only when one has allowed himself to become impregnated with these images of free labor and the "natural man" that one can measure exactly to what a level the wage-slave of bourgeois society has been dragged down, and what a perverse reversal of natural values the world of "alienated labor" proffers us. It is, in the true sense of the word, an *inhuman* existence that the worker leads under capitalism.

Under what concrete form does this alienation manifest itself in bourgeois society? Marx responds: "Under the form of private property": thus precisely designating at the first stroke the practical arena of the class struggle. *Private property*: here is the form of production and consumption which determines everything. Private property is the negation of the human personality. It is the cause of the alienation. The task which will, consequently, be imposed upon Marx is to undertake a rigorous analysis of private property. This analysis must reveal the laws which regulate it, and must deduce from them the destructive forces which develop within its own being and are prepared to negate the negation, that is, to destroy the capitalist system. It is known that Marx attacked this problem in a special work, *Capital,* which has become his major work by its content and the time he devoted to it. But the meaning of *Capital* within the context of Marx's work will not be understood unless one is aware of the road which led him to pose the problem, the road which I have briefly sketched above.

Evidently, Marx did not wait until the writing of *Capital* in order to discover and indicate the road of liberation. Already in the *Holy Family,* almost contemporary with the *Manuscripts,* he expresses it clearly: "It is the proletariat who will execute the death-sentence which private property has suspended over itself in creating the proletariat."

The only road is, then, the *proletarian revolution.* Restored to its place within the context of Marxist thought, this concept acquires a larger meaning that

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is ordinarily attributed to it. It is not merely a matter of political revolution: it is a question of a *total* revolution. Suppressing private property, it will suppress the alienation of work and restore to man his true personality. This victorious proletarian revolution will cut in half the history of humanity. It will change the relations between man and the world. What was before private property will become property which is "truly human and social." And it is only when man is freed of alienation and capitalist servitude that he will be capable of unfolding his truly human qualities.

In the course of these reflections, Marx outlines an *anthropology* of vast scope. He presents a picture of man and of socialist society which, despite its fragmentary character, is of the highest importance because it represents the original stage of the Marxist conception of culture. Marx thus defines *the complete man*: he is the man who in his relations with the world is capable of developing all his senses. Marx understands by this term not merely the five senses, but all the faculties which man manifests in his relations with beings or with the inanimate world. In this connection, thought, will, activity, love are senses. In the condition of alienation in which capitalist society has placed him, man is unable to unfurl all the richness of his senses. The only relation which he has with the external world is the relation of possession or of the desire for possession.

"Private property," says Marx, "has made us so stupid and so limited that an object does not become ours unless we own it."

In contrast, the relations between socialist man and the external world are infinitely richer and more diverse, for he can be united to it through all of his senses. He "appropriates his multiple existence in a multiple manner, that is, like a complete man." Among the relations between man and the world, the relation of ownership occupies a very secondary position. It is replaced by the free activity of all human forms, that is, by the senses. This activity is realized by free labor in all its forms. It is in this sense that Marx still speaks of richness, richness of the socialist individual and of socialist society. The more various the relations of man with his kind and with the material world, the richer he is. The new society produces, to return to Marx's words, "as a continual reality, man in all the richness of his being, the complete man, perfectly realizing all his senses."

Marx presents us here with a succinct outline, but of masterful conception, of communist culture. He depicts, if you will, the socialist "ideal." But it must be observed—and it is necessary to particularly emphasize this point in view of the many false idealistic interpretations of Marx—that even in this realm, where it is not a matter of economic aspects, Marx remains a pure dialectical materialist. He does not project abstract virtues into the new man, but permits him to develop the qualities which he has received from nature, that is to say, his senses. Historical progress consists in the fact that man can now be a *natural man,* not in the development of a superior "ethic." What idealism calls an ethic cannot constitute a problem of Marxist philosophy, since the "ethical" attitude towards others flows naturally from socialism and has no need of any norm.

The method here followed by Marx, particularly in the matter of anthropology, can serve as a model for a purely materialistic method of treating extra-economic problems, the problems of the superstructure. It can, let it be said in passing, serve as an example for many good Marxists, who are prevented by a holy respect from touching cultural questions for fear of falling into idealism.

But the image of socialist man supplied by Marx has still another importance. In all pre-Marxist philosophy, the ideal type of man was the contemplative man. Neither the middle ages nor the modern epoch was able to detach itself entirely from the ideal of the Stoa. Even Goethe, whose death (1832) took place but twelve years before the composition of the *Manuscripts,* had incarnated in his personality the contemplative sage; his human ideal was essentially of an "ethical" nature, in the true sense of the word: a receptive "perception" of the universe. To this Marx opposed his new type of man. Man is man through his work. To be a man means to work, and to work means to transform nature in the image of man, to make nature human at the same time that it makes man natural. Man is no longer static, but dynamic. He is no longer defined by his qualities, but by his activity. This is a tremendous revolution in the history of philosophy. Thanks to Marx, *work—meaning free and conscious work—is for the first time placed upon the throne of history.* A revolutionary principle, even had Marx himself failed to draw the political implications. For man, visualized as an active being transforming the world, ought necessarily to transform also the social world.

Such are, briefly outlined, some of the principal problems dealt with in the *Manuscripts.* It is possible to see here how large is the base upon which Marxism is founded and how limited it would be to see in it nothing but a purely economic doctrine. Marxism can rightfully claim to be called an *integral philosophy*: not only does it point out the practical road of social liberation, it also recreates man and his image of the world. Marx often termed his doctrine "realistic humanism." Man and his liberation constitute the center to which his thought during his entire life ever returned. The Cyclopean labor of *Capital,* the doctrine of revolution and proletarian dictatorship, all these were intended to forge the weapons of steel with which the worker would free himself from the trap of capitalism in order to achieve at last, after centuries of alienation, his true human dignity. Regarded from this height, does not

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the bourgeois prejudice which considers materialistic thinking to be a degradation of man seem the most paradoxical of stupidities? Never did religion "sanctify" man and his work as much as atheistic Marxism.

If now, having considered the writings of the young Marx in relation to the philosophy of the preceding epoch, we compare them to his future work we can see that they are but the primitive stage of the latter. No doubt, many of the consequences of his thinking are only contained in the later works; many essential assertions concerning the laws of capitalist production can be found only in *Capital*. But there is, in return, within the work of his youth a broadness of thought, an abundance of original intuitions whose richness is far from having been exploited. The young Marx appears there as the heir of all the culture of his time. He is like a focal point where all the luminous rays of European philosophy are concentrated. And the vigor of his thought has succeeded in drawing into organic unity these heterogeneous and often contradictory elements. Formally, the work of the young Marx is uneven, dislocated, fragmentary (this is the reason, no doubt, why it has been held in such low esteem). But it contains already all the essential elements of his doctrine. They are to be found there, so to speak, still in the state of an incandescent liquid mass, like the flow issuing from a blast furnace, filled with many impurities but also with many rich materials which Marx will use later on in forging the powerful iron rails of *Capital*. The task he undertook in *Capital* needed specialisation. Many problems of his youth were put aside—or at least put off for later periods of leisure which never came. We know from the conversations of Marx himself how much he felt weighed down by his purely economic studies; he dreamed of devoting himself to philosophy once more after the completion of *Capital*. The gigantic monument which this work became caused this other project to run aground. Thus we are reduced to the philosophic essays of Marx's youth. But the more we explore the depths of the world of ideas which they reveal, the more surely they retain their integrated value at the side of the later works.

For us especially, they bear a markedly real character. With the advent of a socialist society in the USSR, many of the problems of Marxist culture have passed from the realm of theory to that of practice. The relations between man and work, the multiplicity of the human personality: these are questions of burning reality for the Soviet younger generation. With the absolutely new forms of work which are being born in the USSR, the thoughts of Marx which we have outlined take on the value of prophetic predictions. Socialist emulation, the shock brigades, testify to the fact that in the Soviet Union work has become free and conscious. And at the same time, the world which the Soviet working class is building, its factories, its new cities, its central electric plants, its gigantic agricultural communities —this world has become for the workers a part of their social being; they are joined to it much more closely than the Occidental worker is to his world. Here, nature begins to be, according to Marx's definition, an extension of the human body. Thus the beginnings of socialist construction confirm already the profound historic reality of what Marx conceived a century earlier.

Let us indicate another remarkable coincidence.

In considering the work of the young Marx as a prolongation of the philosophy of his predecessors, it is possible to trace *the curve of modern philosophic thought*. This thought, freed from the servitude to the Church which characterised it during the entire middle ages, rises in a slowly ascending line, struggling obstinately, until the work of Kant and the German philosophers of the 18th century. Hegel's powerful thinking takes over the results of his predecessors. But he reflects at the same time the decay of bourgeois capitalist society which he represents: —prolonging vertically the line of philosophic thought he loses himself in the clouds of mysticism. He stiffens in a posture of sterile reaction. This pause in his rise is not an accident; it corresponds to the limits of the society which sustains him. Marx picks up the line of his thought; he inflects it sharply and brings it down to the ground: out of mystical idealism emerges revolutionary materialism. Like the giant Anteus who from contact with the sun draws constantly new strength, theory becomes, at the moment when Marx places it in contact with social reality, a force capable of laying hold of the masses.

Now, this curve repeats itself upon the economic and political plane, but with a chronological difference of about 65 years.

Capitalism expands to its full power two generations after it has been bored through and surpassed by Marxist theory. The curve mounts continually and at an ever increasing tempo; it reaches its height in the years before the war. The world war and the Bolshevik revolution violently break its flight. Capitalism enters the stage of decomposition.

To use a metaphor borrowed from music, we can say that the two curves form together the pattern of a fugue: the theory is the first voice, and designs, two generations in advance, the figure which will be repeated later by the second voice—practical experience. And it is no accident that the writings of the young Marx take on such an actual meaning for us: they stand at the breaking-point of theoretical development, just as we stand ourselves, in the realm of concrete experience, at the breaking-point of capitalist development.

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It Is Later Than You Think:

Abigail to Minerva

Save us, O save us, cries Abigail to Minerva:
Do you see what time it is
On the clock's face, full moon half-risen in July,
Bells chiming? Look at time, Minerva, O come in from the tomb,
That orchard where the apple tree's last century
Now blooms underground, its dry roots spreading
Across the graveyard whose only flower is thin grass
Of lost New Milford. I am here on the top stair
Holding the banister to keep from falling.
Come, come to me, Minerva, before the clock strikes,
Before we dissolve in night wind, the pure darkness that has no name.
Do not wait now until I call no more,
Until the voice itself is gone, when hands lose hold on oak,
When stays in calico no longer hold weak body.
Is that your footstep at the door?
Is your hand raised to knock, have you come quietly
As you once did as a child, deceiving me, stealing the young heart
Out of my clumsy flesh, perfect cool fingers closing over the rich heart?
My body trembling, my lips saying: "No, this is not my sister,
This gold-haired girl, whose pale skin is delight,
Clear water in crystal as the noon sun shines through it,
She is not my sister", but someone seen
As a vision in a noon-tide dream, naked and faintly smiling,
Small hand of love extended from thin arm,
The bare feet scarcely pressing grass
And love's hand offering new-picked buttercups.
Come, come, O come, Minerva, both of us must be here
To meet this hour in an old empty house
Where the clock strikes everywhere, even between its walls,
Through coverlet, through pillow: "One, two; one, two"
As though distant owls called us awake to tell us the actual dream had fled:
That we could not return to what we were
In the old orchard on a summer noon,
There, quite alone, locked in each other's arms in prayer;
That a third face had slipped between us
And a third pair of eyes looked down
From heaven unmoving, piercing sun's rays at noon,
Entering even the darkness of the night that has no moon.

If I were calling someone who had no name, she would come sooner, Minerva!
If my voice were a voice without words,
Would you hear me calling, calling as a bird calls
After the trap has sprung and will call again
After he has been set free, knowing the cage is always there,
Even in the topmost branches of the tallest elm?
Would you hear me then, Minerva, would you know the voice was I,
A tired woman, who has lived fifty years too long
Beyond noon when we met and from that hour had no need of love?

This white house is no longer white, but gray rain-beaten,
Difficult to see at night unless the lamp
Is lit at kitchen window or the moon carries our iron
Cock-crowing weather vane across her face.
Do not step from the path, Minerva, clear road between our hearts,
Sun-lit, moon-lit, for the orchard grass
Uncut so long conceals the treacherous dead grape vine, apple root,
Rose brier, rusty scythe and the half-dug pit that was to be a grave.
Come to the door, say without words through faintly smiling lips:
"Yes, we have lived too long and there is danger everywhere"
Because the clock's hands move across the full moon's face,
Because Grandfather Colby died before the hour struck,
And the whole town knew the clock was slow,
Retarding time that I could not set right:
Loss of a million hours in our blood.
I heard him scream in the same voice that I call now:
"It's late, it's very late"
And after him banks closed, crops failed,
And the workman starved like varnished rats between factory walls
And the food store failed.
"It's late", he said, "will someone break the clock that's always late!"

Come to me, child Minerva, like the child Christ
In a vision to his dying mother,
Thorn-free and body whole, the cross forgotten,
Eyes wide and beautiful, forever piercing death.
Come, come, Minerva, close the door softly as I no longer wait,
Feeling the earth downplunging in darkness, sink in deeper earth,
I saying quietly: "It is very late;
It is later than you think."

HORACE GREGORY

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Morning With The Family

JAMES T. FARRELL

FEELING the presence of Lizz beside him, warm and sweaty, Jim listened to the final tinklings of the alarm clock. He bent over and kissed Lizz.

"I'll get up and make your breakfast," Lizz said yawningly.

"Don't worry," Jim said, looking past her, at the dim dawn-gray of the building next to them.

"Catherine has to be fed anyway," Lizz said.

Jim got out of bed reluctantly, yawned, a tall, raw-boned man in his long and soiled winter underwear. He picked up his truss, put it on carefully, and then drew on his work pants. He sat on the chair, putting on his socks, smelling the perspiration of his own feet, telling himself he ought to bathe to-night. That goddamn business of making your living driving, always feeling that you smelled the manure. He laced on his shoes.

"Jim, I'm so worried," she said.

"I tell you Lizz, forget worrying about that drunken sister of yours."

"It's not that hussy, Jim. It's something else. You know, the curse should have come to me yesterday."

"Well, isn't it sometimes not regular?"

"Yes, but yesterday I felt sick to my stomach. Oh Jim, what are we going to do? I told you not to do it, and you made me. Now, we might have another mouth to feed, as if we didn't have enough already."

"Lizz, let's not cross our bridges before we come to them."

"I don't see how it could be. Mother told me that you can't be caught with a new baby as long as you are still nursing a baby at your breasts. And little Catherine is far, far from being weaned yet."

"Lizz, I say again, let's just not try crossing our bridges before we come to them."

"But, Jim, I'm so afraid. What are we going to do if I am caught?"

"When we got so much to worry about, and so much weight on our shoulders already, we better just try and not let ourselves worry, and not to start crossing bridges before we come to them," Jim said.

"I'll get up now and make your breakfast, Jim."

"Let me get the fire going first," Jim said, buttoning his blue workshirt as he left the room.

The kitchen was chilly, and he rubbed his hands together and shook himself to get his blood circulating. He lit the kerosene lamp. He cleaned out the ashes from the stove, put in old papers, and sticks of box wood. He stood watching the fire leap, hearing the crack of the fire as the wood caught it. He put in a few more sticks, and smiled in fascination at the roar and leap of the golden bright flames, and at the louder crackling of the burning wood. He dropped in a thick chunk of dirty wood with rusty nails sticking out of it, and put the lid over the fire. He filled the kettle with water, and set it on the stove to heat. He washed his hands and face in cold water from the running faucet thinking how someday it would be swell if he could afford a flat with running hot and cold water. Then he would get up in the morning, wash and shave in warm water that ran out of the faucet. On cold mornings, the radiator would already be sizzling. Breakfast would be made by lighting the gas range. Well! Wouldn't that be nice! It seemed like a nice pipe dream anyway, particularly if Lizz was knocked up again. He rubbed his hands across his smooth chin. He was glad he'd shaved last night. But he'd had to. He'd had enough whiskers on him to make a barbed wire fence. He glanced around the dim kitchen.

His belly was empty, just one big noisy hole. He wished breakfast was ready right pronto this minute.

Lizz appearing in her dirty flannel nightgown, her unwashed face smeared with sleep, her black hair tangled loosely together.

"Better put a robe on Lizz, or you'll catch cold."

"Yes I think I will. It is chilly. I only hoped that I would get breakfast started before the little one woke up and started crying for her milk," Lizz said, turning around and dragging her slippered feet out of the kitchen.

He looked toward the covered pot in the corner. Hated goddamn pisspots! But it was chilly, and his kidneys were damn near floating. As he was urinating into the pot, Lizz came back, wearing an old brown skirt over her nightgown, and a rag tied under her chin.

"You got the fire going good and quick," Lizz said, going to the stove, and hearing the last trickling dropping sounds in the corner.

"Yes, I'm experienced at making fires by now," Jim said.

Lizz looked affectionately up at him. Meeting her gaze, he thought of the Lizz that once was, the thin, beautiful shy girl with the beautiful black hair, the trim, neat white body, the lovely complexion, the dark eyes. Her dark eyes were about all that carried over from the Lizz who once was. He looked into those eyes. They closed as he clutched her in his arms, and planted a long wet kiss on her lips. He held her tightly. Her body was warm. She clung to him. He released her. He smiled weakly, then, grimly. He patted her head.

"Don't worry Lizz! You and I are going to stick together, and come down the home stretch like

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greased lightning with the banners waving for us."

"My Jim!" she said with emotion.

Lizz set the larded frying pan over the stove. It sizzled, sputtered off grease. She dropped strips of bacon onto it, and stepped back lest she be burned by a flying speck of grease.

"Well, it looks like it might be a raw day," Jim said.

Lizz took the bacon off, and set it on a plate on the top ledge of the stove.

"How many eggs you want, Jim?

"Two."

"You better take three. A man needs his belly full when he's doing outside work like you are."

"We can't afford it, me eating three eggs a day. That'll be taking food out of the mouths of you and the kids."

"Our Papa is our money man. We got to do well by him. And Jim, the Lord always provides for his own," Lizz said, dropping three eggs into the frying pan.

"Lizz, on the way home to night, I better stop in the drug store and get you some medicine," he said.

"No, Jim, I can't take any. That would be flying in the face of God. If God wants me to have another child, He has His own good purposes, and He'll take care of it."

"All right," Jim said helplessly, his hands dropping to his sides in a despairing gesture.

He started setting the table for breakfast.

"You sit down, Jim. I'll do that. You'll have enough work to do on the wagon to day."

"It's nothing," Jim said, continuing to set the table.

Lizz put eggs, bacon, and coffee before him. He spooned sugar, and thick condensed milk from a can into the coffee. He took a sweet bun from a bag and spread oleomargerine on it. He began eating like a famished man.

"I was hungry all right, Lizz," he said, his mouth stuffed.

Lizz sat down with a cup of coffee. She snatched a sweet roll from the bag. She bit into it. She made a face, and her hand went to her jaw.

"Your teeth?" Jim asked sympathetically.

"Yes." Lizz said; she quickly drank coffee, rolling the warm liquid around her aching tooth. "I can't eat sweets. The sugar gets in my teeth."

"We'll have to try and see that you get to a dentist real soon, and get your teeth fixed. Doctors bills and everything else but necessities can wait for that."

She smiled at him. Jim could see the cavities in her mouth.

"I should have bit on the other side. Having so many children seems to have made them soft, and they get cavities easy because of it."

"Well, old woman, one thing we're going to see to is that they get fixed."

"They're all right. It's nothing to worry about, Jim", she said, picking the frosting off of her bun.

He silently finished his breakfast. The infant squawked. Lizz went to it, and came back with the baby suckling. Jim poured himself another cup of coffee. He sipped it, and watched the baby at its mother's breast. Wonderful! The way kids were born, fed at their mother's breasts ,and grew up. He was sure proud of his. But to have another!

"Ah, isn't she the little sugar dumpling that knows when to call her Mama if she's hungry. Isn't she? Look at her, Jim! Isn't she her Mama's little sugar cake! And she has a hole in her little tummy that makes her all the time cry for Mama's milk, hasn't she? She thinks her mother is a dairy farm, doesn't her Mama's little apple pie?"

Jim grinned weakly. He watched with softening, mellow eyes. He was glad he had kids. Damn glad, even if they were so much trouble and expense.

"The little daughter is cute," he said.

"She's her Mama's darling," Lizz said.

Jim's eyes drifted away from Lizz and the infant. He looked out the window. The sky above the shack where the Negroes lived in back was gray with the first touches of the dawn. Soon it would be pink, and then, the sun would bust through it. It was nice to watch the dawn coming, the sun busting right square into a new day. It was nice, too, to wake up and know that it was another day. You felt better waking up fresh at the beginning of the day than you did when you tumbled into bed at the end of it. The morning of a new day made you feel that something might happen to you, for you. He could see red now beginning to spread through the grayness and through the darkness hanging over from the night. Soon the sun would be above the shack, large and golden. Yes, it was nice to see another day coming. But what could happen to him? . . . Still, it was nice.

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water.

He turned back, and listened while Lizz sang, and he watched the infant, its lips firmly clasped over it's mother's nipple.

"I'll be glad when we have our family raised, Jim."

"Then the boys will be able to work and bring some money in. The old man and the old woman will have a few comforts for themselves then," Jim said.

"Yes, if they don't leave us when they grow up, the way my brother, Ned, ran off with Mildred. She's so sick, and she's older than he is. I never knew why he did it. Not ,of course, that she isn't one of the finest women you would ever expect to meet."

"Well, that's Ned's business, not ours."

"But let me catch one of mine turning stinker, and running off to marry some girl when their mother

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and father need their pay envelope! Let me catch them!"

"We won't have to worry about our kids, Lizz. And anyway that's a bridge that needs no crossing for a long time to come."

"Oh Jim look at Mama's little cherubim!" Lizz said, turning her eyes down on the feeding infant.

"She's getting to know us too, isn't she?" Jim grinned.

"Know us? Say she's the smartest little thing! Smart as a whip. Ah yes, she knows her Mama who feeds her, and takes care of her, and she knows her great big Papa, and she knows all her big brothers and her sister too. Ah, she's the smartest little thing, and when she grows up to be a great big bootiful girl, she's going to be a school teacher," Lizz said.

"Ah, they're cute little buggers," Jim said.

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water.

Jim held the infant while Lizz made the sandwiches for his lunch.

"I want to hurry with this, before that herd in there asleep wakes up and comes out here for breakfast," Lizz said.

"Yes", Jim said abstractedly, his eyes shifting from Lizz to the baby that slept in his arms, its puckered face seeming to him like the face of an old man.

"I'm glad I got the little sweetheart fed before they're up," Lizz said spreading oleomargerine lavishly on the unduly thick slices of bread that she had cut.

"Lizz, just this minute I was looking at the little bugger's face while it's asleep. It looks like the face of an old man," Jim said.

"They're cute. But they are a heap of trouble."

"You know, Lizz, it's interesting, the way they slowly begin to know us, and to understand. You know, they are like little animals, and then, they gradually become human, don't they?"

"Say!" Lizz said, swinging around, and holding aloft the saw-bladed bread knife. "Don't you say that a child of mine is an animal."

"Lizz, you didn't catch what I was driving at. I didn't seem to make myself clear, and you didn't catch what I was driving at," Jim said with a struggling persuasiveness in his voice, seeking by his tone to convey to Lizz what his words had failed to do.

"A child comes from God," Lizz said belligerently.

"I know it. I didn't mean that it didn't, Lizz."

"God created that little one, and all of us, and God created all animals. He gave to my little one a soul. He didn't give a soul to animals," Lizz said.

"I know it, Lizz. You didn't see what I mean."

"God created us because he needed souls for Heaven. When God made the angels, Lucifer, the head arch-angel, was too proud. He wanted to be like God. So God banished him and all the fallen angels who sided with him, and said that they would live in Hell for all eternity. They became devils, and the Devil, and all his other devils, they're all fallen angels. And there was room in Heaven for souls. And God created Adam and Eve, the first man and woman ,and every offspring from Adam and Eve on down through all the ages, they have souls. There is a place in Heaven waiting for them, if they obey the laws of God and the church, because of the room left in Heaven by Lucifer and all the fallen angels who were guilty of the sin of pride. Animals don't have souls though."

"But, Lizz, you'll wake the little one here."

"But don't say my precious little sugar cube is like an animal. She has a soul, a soul washed white as the cleanest sheet by the holy waters of Baptism. She's not mine and yours. We're only her caretakers. She's God's."

"I didn't mean it that way."

"And Jim she's so smart. Ah, she's a little wise one, she is," Lizz said.

"She should be. She's an O'Neill. And when she grows up to be a big girl, she's going to be as pretty as her mother was as a girl, isn't she, Lizz?"

"Oh Jim, I was never pretty."

"You were too. You were the prettiest little trick. God, Lizz, I'll never forget you in the days when we used to go to dances, and do the cake walk."

"I was an innocent babe in the woods."

"Lizz, I'm not ashamed to confess it. You made a man out of me."

"You always were a man. Don't I remember how you could fight. You weren't afraid of anybody."

"Well, I never was the kind to take sass."

"Well, here's your lunch, Jim, " Lizz said, embarrassed. "Your sandwiches. That ought to do you, with an apple and piece of cake. You can get yourself a cup of hot coffee."

"It's too much, Lizz," Jim said.

He studied the sleeping infant in his arms, its tiny face that looked so sour, almost unnatural. Just now, it was getting pretty, he thought. He remembered his other children when they had been at this stage of infancy. He recollected how they had become smart, learned to cry and bawl when they wanted food, their diapers changed, or to be held, swung, sung to and petted. He recalled how they had all fought with almost bitter animal intensity to get their lips around their mother's nipple, and how they all cooed when their little bellies were full. God what a funny thing it was to have kids. He would be hot for Lizz, and his old john would stand up for her, and he'd go at her. And out of it, a kid would form and grow inside of Lizz. She would carry it like some troublesome burden, and as it grew within her, her face would become soft, and beautiful in a way that a woman's face never was beautiful except when she was having a kid. And

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her time would come. She would holler from the pains, as if she couldn't stand them. And then, in a lot of pain, and blood, and mess, the kid would come. And here it was, and it fed at her breast, and slowly grew, laughed, cried, learned to walk and talk, and who its papa and mama were, and its brothers and sister, and it became a person not like any other person in all the world. It grew up, went to school, learned, to read, became a man, or a woman, and then. . . . He had been a kid like this, a sleeping little buggar without a care in the world except his mother's tits. And from all this beautiful innocence, he had grown up, walked through muck and Christ what else, and . . .

"Well, Lizz, when the little bugger grows up, she won't have it as hard as her old man and her old lady," he said reflectively.

"She'll live off the fat of the land. She'll have rings on her fingers, and bells on her toes," Lizz said.

Jim's eyes again travelled to the kitchen window. Outside, over the shacks, above the alley, beyond Wentworth Avenue, the sky was lighting. An ink of colors was dripping through the mist, and clouds, and receding darkness. There were irregular red streaks, deep dyed reds, and rich dark pinks, and the sun was coming out. The break of day, now that too, like kids, that was something wonderful. God has certainly made a wonderful world for man, if man would only take advantage of it, and bring some justice into it. But he had to be up and out to work. He didn't have time to sit here dreaming and thinking.

"Old man O'Neill, you better be hustling if you want to punch that time clock on time, and not be docked," Lizz said.

"Yes, I guess so," Jim said.

"Here, let me take my little precious angel back now," Lizz said, and Jim carefully but awkwardly handed the infant back to his wife.

"Mama, is breakfast ready?" Little Margaret called.

"Now here comes the regiment," Lizz said.

Jim kissed Lizz.

"Take care of yourself, Jim."

"Yes and you too, rabbit," Jim said picking up his lunch bundle.

"We'll be here waiting with supper on the table when daddy comes marching home," Lizz said.

"Mama!" Little Margaret called.

"Hello there. How's the man this morning?" Jim said, seeing Dennis standing sleepily at the kitchen entrance, barefooted and in dirty underwear.

"Hello Papa!" Dennis said.

"You little stinker in your bare feet. Go put your shoes on before you catch pneumonia," Lizz said.

"Come on, and your old man will cary you back to get dressed," said Jim.

He put Dennis on his shoulders.

"Papa's my horse," Dennis giggled as Jim jogged him back to the front bedroom where he, Robert, and Little Margaret slept.

"Kiss me, Papa!" Little Margaret called from the dark and airless bedroom.

Jim dumped Dennis on the bed. He picked Little Margaret up, and took her breath away by swinging up high over his head. He kissed her.

"Whose princess are you?" he asked as he set her back on the bed.

"Papa's," she said breathlessly.

"Who do you love best in the world?"

"My Papa. And he's going to swing me again. Isn't he?"

"Papa has to go to work now."

"Aw gee, just once more?"

He swung her, and she giggled.

"Stop crying, you bawl baby!" Little Margaret said as Robert cried, watching his father and sister hopefully, his eyes shining in the darkness.

Jim swung Robert, kissed him, tossed him gently back onto the bed.

"You kids mind your mother now," he said.

"I will. But Papa, I have a most awful time with these bad boys," Little Margaret said.

"You be their little mother," Jim said, his voice cracked with emotion.

"See, Dennis, Papa said you got to mind me, and you too, Robert, you little stinker," Little Margaret said.

Jim went to his room, got his coat, put on his thick, square topped teamster's cap, and slowly walked out of the house to go to work.

Two Poems

Transfer

I

It must have been that the nigger was tongue-tied,
Or absent minded, or daft with the heat,
But howsoeverbeit he didn't say sir,
So they took and bounced him out on the street.

And then the motorman brained him with his crank,
And the conductor clubbed him with his gun,
But before they could place the nickles on his eyes,
The cops rushed up to see justice done.

The city-court judge was merciful to him:
Gave him just four years and suspended his fine,
For bruising white knuckles, inciting to riot,
And holding up traffic on the Peachtree line.

When the boy came to, he was still right skittish,
They figured they had got him rid of his harm,

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By beating his head, and displacing his jawbone,
So they made him trusty on the prison-farm.

II

But one day a red sun beat on the red hills
As he was in the pasture haltering a mare
And something went snap in his trusty old head
And he started a-riding away from there.

When he got to Atlanta, the folks took him in,
And fed him and clothed him, and hid him away;
And let him out only when the cops disappear
From the streets of Darktown at the dust of day;

Then he goes to the car-stop and takes his stand,
And some call him daffy, and some call him smart
But all have heard the one text he's been preaching,
And some have the whole sermon down by heart:

"I stayed in my place, and my place stayed wid me,
Took what was dished, said I liked it fine:
Figgered they would see that I warn't no trouble.
Figgered this must be the onliest line.

"But this is the wrong line we been ridin',
These cars doan git us where we got to go.
Got to git transferred to a new direction.
We can stand so much, then doan stand no mo'."

Southern Cop

Let us forgive Ty Kendricks.
It was in darktown. He was young.
His nerves were jittery. The day was hot.
The nigger ran out of the alley,
And so he shot.

Let us understand Ty Kendricks.
The nigger must have been dangerous
Because he ran;
And here was a young lad with a chance
To prove himself man.

Let us condone Ty Kendricks.
If we cannot decorate.
When he found what the nigger was running for
It was too late;
And all we can say for the nigger is
It was unfortunate.

Let us pity Ty Kendricks.
He has been through enough,
Standing there, his big gun smoking,
Rabbit-scared, alone;
Having to hear the wenches wail
And the dying nigger moan.

STERLING A. BROWN

Poets of the People*

HAROLD ROSENBERG

SANDBURG had rediscovered the purpose and the origins of the kind of poetry he writes. *The People, Yes* is the best thing he had ever written, because it is the only legitimate thing he could have hoped to write. His style and his temperament come out of Whitman to such an extent that he could achieve himself as a poet only within Whitman's world. Having at length realized this, he had consciously dedicated his book to Whitman's old inexhaustible theme: the American people. *The People, Yes* is a long poem about life in America; one might even say it is an endless poem—since any reader who knows anything about American department-stores, road-workers, police-courts, wise guys, ministers, geography, automobile parts, street stuff or newspaper stuff, can add as much as he likes to the book.

All the forms our modern American poetry has devised for itself find a natural setting within this 300 page panorama. There is the conversational dialect of the "free verse" movement:

Who shall speak for the people?
Who knows the works from A to Z;

the list or catalogue of the "objectivists":

Who knows the people, the migratory harvest hands and berry pickers, the loan shark victims, the installment house wolves, etc.;

the reiterated statement:

The sea moves always, the wind move always.
They want and want there is no end to their wanting;

as well as the isolated image, the scientific phrase, prose rhythms, literal quotations. One had almost forgotten that Sandburg was so modern.

For a period of some ten years, American poetry had been mainly devoted to a refinement of these forms: Cummings performed atmospheric stunts with barroom slang; Marianne Moore plastered her verse like an overseas trunk with quotations from many sources in order to suggest a broad world of fact and values: Pound's and Eliot's museums contained documents, tales, and verbal specimens gathered from a whole jungle of history; Williams, who remained in his own backyard, polished his images down to the finest particle; Fearing learned how to tune up newspaper facts into a metropolitan tabloid with the headlines dashingly spotted. Compared with the streamlined poetic machinery man-

* *The People, Yes*, by Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.
Selected Poems of Vachel Lindsay. The Macmillan Co. $1.50.

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ufactured by these people, the poetry of Sandburg belonged and continues to belong to the early-model stage.

But the unperfected functioning of these poetic forms within *The People, Yes* raises the whole question of the character and direction of modern American poetry. Whence did these forms originate, and to what end were they conceived?

Whitman himself provides the answer with remarkable clarity in his Preface to the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass*: in fact, he answers with a gigantic catalogue of the things American poetry should contain and celebrate: "The genius of the United States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, nor in its ambassadors or authors or colleges or churches or parlors, nor even in its newspapers or inventors . . . but always most in the common people. Their manners speech dress friendships—the freshness and candor of their physiognomy—the picturesque looseness of their carriage . . . their deathless attachment to freedom, [etc.] . . . these too are unrhymed poetry. It awaits the gigantic and generous treatment worthy of it." The poet, he finds elsewhere to be: "the channel of thoughts and things without increase or diminution."

In the original context of this attempt to grasp directly American life, the forms of modern verse were no arbitrary word-play, "pure art" design, timeless warehouse, or sophisticated simplist image. The presentation of *facts,* visual or verbal, in poetry sought its primary justification in an enthusiasm for the historical role of concrete material accomplishment. The object which is assumed to have a poetic meaning merely because it exists, the phrase which has poetic meaning merely because it has been written or spoken, Williams'

so much depends
upon
a red wheel
barrow

or Moore's

"Dracontine cockatrices, perfect and poisonous from the beginning", they present themselves as a contrast to sea-serpented regions "unlit by the half-lights of more conscious art"

still look back longingly to that moment in the 19th century when humanity first sought the key to its fate in the realities of its material acquisitions.

The dynamic principle with which Whitman fused and completed his huge array of details was himself, his own person, as a representative human individual living within the particular influences of 19th century America. His "poems of realities and science and of the democratic average and basic equality" had meaning because "in the center of all, and object of all, stands the Human Being, towards whose heroic and spiritual evolution poems and everything directly or indirectly tend, Old World or New."

In the center of all stood the Human Being! Every detail of American life, every wheelbarrow, every word in every book in the library, every machine, everything cast off and floating away, was lifted to the level of poetry by what America was doing and would do in the future for the liberation of the Human Being.

To understand, therefore, how the forms of modern verse created under the wing of Whitman came to detach themselves from the popular motives of Whitman's "particulars and details magnificently moving in vast masses," it is necessary to bear in mind the historic decline of America's democratic hopes.

By a cynical historical coincidence, the modern attempt to revive the poetry of American enthusiasm came about at the very moment when the World War was preparing to bestow world-hegemony upon the United States. The dynamic role of America's material advancement was about to undergo its human test. Could it function, as Whitman had predicted, as the "greatest factor in known history" for man's liberation?

For an instant, Wilson created the appearance that the promise would be realised. The kings and tyrants would be overthrown, the dependent nations liberated, democracy would be guaranteed everywhere. Almost at once, however, came the unmasking: the voice was the voice of the old democracy, but the hand, the controlling force, was the hand of the new finance imperialism. The liberating institutions of the nineteenth century had evolved steadily, and almost invisibly, into the slavemaking apparatus of the twentieth. The America confronted by the newly-born "American School" of writers, with its plebeian, populist bias, its faith in what the whole people could do within the framework of political democracy, was no longer a "nation of nations" ordained to win for man everywhere in the world freedom from all chains and oppression—the America of world-monopolies was characterised by a quite opposite species of internationalism.

A small section of the American working class and intellectuals resisted this perversion of America's destiny. The struggles of the I.W.W. and individual socialists, the trade-union resistance to American intervention in the U.S.S.R., the anti-war demonstrations and the great strikes, represented the continuing life of the American democratic spirit. But it was no longer a question of one-sided enthusiasm, of a straight, unbroken and peaceful road towards the aggrandizement and perfection of the human being.

Whitman had definitely dated his poetry: "I know very well that my *Leaves* could not possibly have emerged or been fashion'd or completed, from any other era than the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, nor any other land than democratic America, and from the absolute triumph of the National

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Union arms." His poetical heirs ignored this fact. They made no effort to comprehend the antithetical force which had entered into control of American life, cutting off its clear ascent, and preparing the threat of tragedy for its future. Their "socialism" was a compound of naive hope and good will. People like Waldo Frank and, later, John Gould Fletcher, still clinging to the dream of America's natural destiny, were compelled to conceive America as a sort of geographic mystery, an occult time-and-space shape from which all sort of vague, transcendental glories would shed themselves over the face of humanity.

Deprived by the age of even the possibility of Whitman's blasting and fusing social enthusiasm, Sandburg's verse of this period merely combined the technical carelessness of the master with certain new deficiencies of his own day. His poetry possessed neither hardness, clarity, technical scrupulousness, breadth of feeling, nor purpose. It went neither straight up nor straight down . . . it ambled about in factories, wharves, city streets, appeasing itself with sighs and an occasional grunt of indignation. Mimicking the master's brazen "I celebrate Myself," it would coyly insist, "This is the simple Me, and this is the way I feel." Suddenly, without warning, it might break into some super-fancy writing of the American-in-Paris type—an anticipation of the movement's destiny.

> *The sea-mist green of the bowl's bottom is a dark throat of sky crossed by quarreling forms of umber and ochre and yellow changing faces.*

The essential subject, The People, entered his verse occasionally, but could find very little to do there. American facts no longer moved naturally towards a human center—they fell apart into isolated groupings, still retaining a certain air of secrecy and newness, but tending more and more to become mere items of local color, equivalent to other items collected in any time or space of the universe.

By 1926, having passed through the downfall of Wilson, the Versailles Treaty, the red-hunts, the inauguration of the period of prosperity, and the suspension of energy in the American labor movement, the major strength of the populist movement in modern American poetry became completely detached from its social origins. The old theme of the broadest average and the countless examples and practical occupations in the United States departed from the forms which it had originated for itself. Poetry was now no longer the "medium" of the masses of the people, but began to justify itself by an existence and tradition of its own. It poured its energies into the development of a new kind of aristocratism in verse, a sort of pessimistic anti-plebeianism based on the refurbishing of plebeian forms.

The function of this anti-popular movement in eliminating and transforming as much of the old matter of American sentiment in poetry as possible was essentially critical. It consisted of a denial of the validity of any one-way enthusiasm towards things and events, of any "message" in poetry. It created a dichotomy between spontaneous human emotions and their poetic "correlatives". It recognized that the poet could no longer lift his direct experiences into the realm of the absolute by subsuming them under the genius of America. It asserted the non-existence of all absolute worlds and of all absolute human beings. It acknowledged, by implication at least, that the negative force which had entered American life, changing the character and the meaning of all American enterprise, had produced contradictions within the most intimate responses and values of the individual's existence, so contracting the area of possible certainty that no love, no loyalty, no faith could any longer be accepted in the old way.

This poetry, tending towards pure decoration, the theme of negation and despair, and the faceless objectivity, or to be more exact phenomenology, of the image and the historico-literary pattern, openly emphasised and exploited its lack of any dynamic principle of coherence. This is thoroughly evident in the *Wasteland,* the *Cantos,* the poems of Marianne Moore, and other representative and "pure" works of the period. The primary esthetic aim is a recollective design, with whatever sentiments happen to arise therefrom.

This is to have retained from Whitman's populist poetry its objective or stylistic features: masses of phenomena, popular flexibility of speech, but to have critically rejected its American populist dynamism. It was this critical rejection that automatically turned the formalists towards the European schools for guidance, and allowed them to contribute to English and French poetry. They represent the end of imperturbable American naiveté, and the new linking of American and European values.

The blunt, taken-for-granted verse of Sandburg was pushed into the background of influence by this critical and objective current in American poetry. His monolinear writings, lacking psychological complication, verbal energy, associative scope—lacking, in short, both modern science and modern skepticism, had taken on a singularly unbearable, left-behind air in a cultural milieu dominated by the paradoxes of Freud, Spengler, neo-catholicism, classicist humanism, surrealism, etc. In the public schools and anthologies he still continued to figure as a living modern poet, but the emphases of the times were against him.

With the revival of the American labor movement since the beginning of the depression, the reign of the formalists in American poetry has come to a close. Once again, poetry is attempting a statement, an affirmation, a pledge. Once again, it seeks to

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establish for itself a dynamic principle of organization. It is in the spirit of this recovered concern with material "content" as a basis for form that we approach a judgment of *The People, Yes.*

We need not enter here into detailed errors of social theory to be found in Sandburg's poem; it is the movement and inflection of the whole mass that concerns us.

Warmly believing in the intelligence, the goodwill, the vitality, and the suffering of the great mass of the people, placing his faith in the spontaneous "heart" of American men and women, Sandburg, through the reality of direct experiences of American life itself, reveals the act that the term "the people" has come to mean, mainly, the working class and the small folk of the town and countryside, the people who are poor and who toil without reward. Other social elements, "those who have forgotten work and the price at which life goes on" appear as "the refuse of humanity, the off-scourings, the encumberings." It is the knowledge of the working population that comprises his scores of pages of aphorisms, legends, jokes, yarns, opinions, typical instances, queries. It is the knowledge of the worker at his machine that he vaunts in the magnificent section 22 of the poem:

Knowing in the mystery of one automatic machine expertly shaping for your eyes another automatic machine
Knowing in traction, power-shafts, transmissions, twist drills, grinding gears—
Knowing in the night air mail, the news-reel flicker, the broadcasts from Tokio, Shanghai, Bombay and Somaliland—
The people a knower whose knowing grows by what it feeds on
The people wanting to know more, wanting.
The birds of the air and the fish of the sea leave off where man begins.

A profound and devoted statement! It penetrates deeply into the true meaning of labor and the products of man. It accepts modern industrial production as the highest stage in man's history—yet a stage which can be surpassed.

But is Sandburg conscious of the implications of the division he has discovered for himself between the working population and the non-laboring offscourings and encumberings? Hardly. For him the People is still one mass, and the offscourings are a disease germ within the mass, which the mass will overcome or absorb through the vitality of its white corpuscles.

In short, so great is Sandburg's self-effacement before the majestic multitudinousness of the people that he overlooks the actual situation of the working masses. Once again, it is the absence from his poetry of any inkling of the war of contradictions which moves modern society. Once again, it is the old uncritical, one-way optimism, fostered by America's easy and spontaneous successes of the past, the belief that without planning, without a conscious gauging of forces, its will and mysterious election will carry it through to the needed solutions.

Yet, in reality, what does the people's knowing, both the old knowing through sayings and yarns and the new knowing through machines and mass-labor, what does this popular, multiform and formless knowing actually mean in a society ruled by other people who never touch a machine? Is the knowledge of the working portion of the People the same knowledge as the knowledge of the rulers, so that the whole People knows as one being? Or is the knowledge of the great masses of people in a society which is divided into classes the genial knowledge of slaves? The rulers have a species of knowledge and a species of contact with social reality which is concealed from the great masses of people. The knowledge of the rulers is a rude and close-reckoning knowledge—and Sandburg has great contempt for it—in fact, the over-contempt which grows from his idealistic position.

The rulers are hypocrites, and think only of money. This judgment satisfies Sandburg. He fails to see that behind this outer disguise of morality, which he has succeeded in penetrating, the rulers conceal not merely greedy little human beings, "like the rest of us," but a great cunning and a great knowledge, which manifest themselves in their acts, in their power as a force. This ruling-class knowledge is part of the knowledge of the people only in the sense that two enemy strategies are part of the same war. The desire to see a war as a whole does not, however, justify regarding it as a parade. Sandburg's People simply parades forward into the future like some all-containing organism, multiplying itself, cleansing itself, and searching its way, but never meeting an enemy, never learning to reconnoiter, never capturing a position, never experiencing the responsibility of saving the future from the past. His poem closes with:

In the darkness with a great bundle of grief the people march.
In the night, and overhead a shovel of stars for keeps, the people march:
Where to? What next?

So much for the mystically optimistic and undynamic character of Sandburg's conception of history and social life. And what of the quality of labor and the people's knowledge and life in the present day of struggle? Can that be uncritically celebrated, as it was by Whitman in his day of the triumph of the Union forces over slavery and reaction? Is there joy and human amplitude in this labor and the knowledge it brings? Or is it not rather a fact of this divided society of ours, that what fills the mind of the worker in any given industry, or in the reminiscences of his rest, or in the story swapped with the boys, is isolated from the knowledge, experiences,

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and desires of the whole of society, and, for the lack of a free interchange with it, must remain broken off and incomplete? If this be true, then, though it is knowledge, it comes also to be the exact opposite of knowledge; it becomes, this machine labor and "casual drift of routine", an alien pressure upon the mind, an "occupational psychosis", a list of inescapable images, meaningless and oppressive, obstructing the living play of his senses and his development.

These contradictions, inherent in both the relations and the qualities of popular life, Sandburg blots out with his totalitarian image of the People, in which all classes, all varieties of knowledge, all opposing forces, are dissolved. The People as a whole holds all of knowledge and experience in its bosom; but it is knowledge and experience in which no dynamic principle is identified; it is reality as a phenomenological catalogue, in which all things line up equally with all others; it is the indiscriminate evolutionary equalitarianism which the wrong-headed so frequently attribute to socialist philosophy.

American populism developed the poetic forms of the catalogue, the image, and free rhythms because it tried to become the expression of the life of the masses. It lost its dynamic quality with the falling away of popular enthusiasm—to perform in his day what Whitman did in his, Sandburg would be compelled to introduce into his poetry a new dynamic principle of social propulsion, that of the class struggle. But his populist outlook has failed to become aware of this objective dynamic and the new tragic and hopeful sentiments that arise from it. Instead, he postulates a classless *human* society at the present time and at all times; his point of view permits the ideal to replace the reality, and its undramatic optimism to overgrow the clear and arduous paths of history.

Hence Sandburg can develop no new form, but is restricted to the forms originated by Whitman 75 years ago: the image, the catalogue, street speech, commercial and professional dialect, prose rhythms; completed by the indecisive subjective sentiment of the people's goodness and misery and creative destiny.

With or without the sentiment, this is as far as American poetry has gone. The proletarian poets, making more or less use of the modernist "deviation" (Schneider and Gold, for instance, being unable to understand its critical function with respect to the emotions—some of the younger poets, on the other hand, acepting formalism as the natural and exclusive language of poetry) have, so far, failed to rise above the populist current. Fearing, for example, whose handling of the catalogue device is firmer and more contemporaneously nervous than Sandburg's, is, however, more remote than the latter from its social origins and is even weaker in conviction; he is closer to a Marxist position only in the negative sense of having lost a good part of the latter's populist delusions.

Vachel Lindsay's poetry provides the material for an accurate estimate of the class basis of the populist spirit in American poetry, and of the reasons why its modern revival originated in the Middle West. The poetry of Lindsay is characterised by the internal conflicts of a peasant intelligence developing in a society penetrated by urban and industrial influences. His *Santa-Fé Trail,* describing an automobile with such lines as:

Its eyes are lamps like the eyes of dragons.
It drinks gasoline from big red flagons,

and with its contrast of the hurtling cars with the sweet-singing, restfully melancholy, homely-entitled bird, the Rachel-Jane, recalls nothing so much as the folk songs of Eastern Europe during the first days of mechanized transportation. Through the city he walks like a stranger. Whatever he finds memorable in its life, tends to remain static in his mind, slowly expanding itself into a large irridescent bubble of myth. The dancing, crap-shooting Negroes of the big-city slums become voodoo-worshippers of the African Congo; the Chinese laundryman of San Francisco, ironing away through the night to earn his bread, is surrounded by nightingales, ladies and gods of the past; the city householder waking at midnight hears overhead the rushing ghosts of the buffaloes.

His conception of poetry itself is a peasant conception: ballads, with easy, old-time rhymes, and repeated refrains and choruses. It is not popular poetry in Whitman's sense of poetry of the occupations and movements of the people; it is popular verse in the antique sense of something an audience likes to sing or recite dreamily around an outdoor fireside. Lindsay's contemporaneity is less conscious, less purpseful, less responsible than Sandburg's. He employs the facts of modern industrial life only because they have forced themselves into every American terrain no matter how distant. These unwelcome modern facts he struggles to restore to a pre-industrial setting. Thus he reveals, perhaps more clearly than any other modern American poet, the class basis of modern American populism: the farmer relating himself to city life and the working class.

How far this populist spirit can go, even while making use of forms older than those which is consciously developed for itself, is revealed in Lindsay's famous *Abraham Lincoln Walks At Midnight,* reprinted in the present volume. Lincoln was *the* hero of this movement from the beginning. In his mind the idea of progress took the form of the idea of human liberty. Why should not Lindsay find that, walking into our modern day

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn
Shall come:—the shining hope of Europe free:
The league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,

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Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp and Sea?

American populism is consistent with and can become a force for world-socialism. It can also be deflected by the enemies of the masses into something exactly opposite. It cannot develop socialism out of itself. Intellectually and spiritually it needs the Marxist analysis of social forces to complete it; just as, politically, the farmer-class needs the organized workers to lead it. Populism can behold its task and its future clearly only within the mirror of the revolutionary Marxist understanding of capitalist contradictions. It must augment its good will and its instinctive grasp of the desires and requirements of the great masses of the people with disciplined intellectual research.

In poetry, the fusion of social accuracy with social impulse would open up new perspectives. It would rid poetry of the reactionary backwash which Whitman so detested in his own day. Had it been evident in America twenty years ago it would have given direction to Lindsay, and would have saved such high peaks of his poetry as the *Abraham Lincoln, Factory Windows Are Always Broken, Here's To The Mice,* from drowning in isolation within a froth of false legend and guitar-trifles.

Vignettes from China

AGNES SMEDLEY

A MAN passed along the Shanghai streets today, and by chance he was a Japanese. This was chance only, but what transpired was symbolic. For he threw away a cigarette stub and two ricksha coolies saw it and rushed forward to get it. Their long, heavily-veined scrawny hands reached toward the street at the same time. They struck at each other. Then they fell to fighting, and they fought like dogs. They fought for a cigarette stub thrown away by a Japanese. Of course, it was but a chance that the passer-by was Japanese, but this lent intensity to this degraded scene.

On this same day, in another part of the city, this happened: A young ricksha coolie, perhaps blinded by the fearful heat, stumbled and fell, and was struck by a passing tram car. It seems he was killed instantly, for he lay motionless, his face upturned to the sky. The shafts of his ricksha were crushed under the wheels of the tram.

These shafts worried a Japanese policeman who walked over and, without touching the ricksha coolie to see if he were dead or alive, began removing the broken shafts from under the car. After successfully removing the broken wood from the track, the Japanese policeman turned to the prostrate ricksha coolie, grasped him by a leg, and dragged him over to the curb, motioning to the tram that all was well. The car proceeded and the perspiring Japanese stood looking after it. Not once had he bent down to feel the pulse or the heart of the man at his feet, to see if he were alive or dead. It was the tram car and the profit it brings to its owners, that was important.

The prone ricksha coolie was young and strong, a lad of some nineteen or twenty summers. Perhaps he was a peasant from the country, recently come to Shanghai. For youth and strength were still on his body and it seemed that tuberculosis or heart sickness had not yet decimated him. Perhaps he came down from near Soochow where the hungry peasants have again revolted against the high taxes and the looting of the landlords—and where the Nanking Government has sent troops to force them to pay or to die. Many of these peasants have come to Shanghai as ricksha coolies, stevedores, or have become beggars. Now this lad is dead, and a policeman did not even consider it worth while to bend down and see if his heart has ceased to beat.

Today this happened in Shanghai:

Two motor vehicles rolled along a street. The front one was a Japanese truck, with two Japanese marines standing in the back. The truck drove slowly and impeded the progress of a private car in the rear in which sat a foreign white man and a Chinese chauffeur.

Irritated by the slow pace, the foreigner in the private car bent forward and said to his Chinese chauffeur: "Drive around and go home."

The chauffeur answered: "That's a Japanese truck."

"Well, what if it is?"

"I can't pass a Japanese truck."

"Why not?"

"I can't. They would be angry."

"Well, let them be angry! Pass! Drive around, I tell you!"

Instead of passing, the chauffeur drew the private car up to the curb, got out, sat down on the curb and began to cry. He cried like a baby.

Later the foreigner said: "A Chinese chauffeur will never pass a Japanese car or truck, or a police car. For generations the common people have been subjected and taught servility and degradation. They must never be presumptuous enough to pass a policeman, an official, or a military man."

Recently I personally experienced this:

I went up to a motor car station in Shanghai and ordered a taxi. No other person was in the station. There was no taxi at the moment and the Chinese clerk in charge told me I would have to wait for about five minutes. I waited. Within a few minutes a Japanese came up and ordered a taxi. Soon a Jap-

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anese woman and two children came up and also ordered a car.

Then the Chinese clerk in charge of the station turned to me and said: "You can have the third car. There are two other people before you!"

"I was here first. These people came after me," I protested.

"Well, you must take the third car. You must wait," he repeated.

"What do you mean! I was here first and you are giving this car to these people because they are Japanese."

The Chinese clerk was frightened. "You must wait," he repeated to me.

I went up to a taxi that rolled in, but the chauffeur would not allow me to take the car because a Japanese was waiting. There was nothing for me to do but leave the station.

Incidents similar to this I have witnessed in many parts of China. There is today in China a degradation, a servility before the Japanese that is indescribable. The origin of it is to be sought, not in the Chinese masses, but in Nanking. Since the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in September, 1931, the Nanking Government and all its officials and military men have told the Chinese people that China is too weak to fight, that it must submit. For five years the whole Chinese press, the schools, and all other public institutions, have taught this demoralizing idea. Vast Chinese armies have retreated before a handful of Japanese. Slowly but surely the poison of fear and servility has seeped into the blood of China. The Japanese no longer need to use guns to conquer the country. All they have to do is to send an unarmed Japanese woman or child, or a Japanese or Korean gangster, and get all they want.

The Japanese know this. They have no fear of any Chinese except the Communists and the Chinese Red Army. These they fear and these forces alone, with their sympathizers, prevent the Japanese from openly occupying the country. Every other Chinese they can scare to death.

The press has just reported this typical incident: Along the Lunghai Railway in Honan Province in Central China, two Japanese got on the train. The Chinese conductor went through the cars and asked for tickets. He asked the Japanese for tickets also. They shrugged their shoulders and replied "May yo" (have not), then turned and gazed placidly out of the window. The conductor asked again but the Japanese replied the same. The conductor shifted from foot to foot, then went away.

Soon a group of armed Chinese railway gendarmes—the terror of poor Chinese—came through the car. They halted before the Japanese and asked for their tickets. The two Japanese again shrugged their shoulders, said "May yo," and gazed placidly out of the window. The gendarmes asked again but the Japanese did not even reply. Like whipped dogs the gendarmes sneaked away and left the car,—and the Japanese rode without tickets.

The Japanese ride free on the trains of China. The same Chinese gendarmes who will beat a poor Chinese to death if they catch him on a train without a ticket, crawl like worms before a Japanese. Often I have related these incidents to friends. Bitter arguments ensue. "What do you expect?" they ask: "Do you expect these conductors and gendarmes to disobey the Nanking Government? Do you expect them to do what the whole Chinese army is ordered not to do—fight the Japanese on the spot?"

"They could put the Japanese off the train."

"Yes—and the Nanking Government would instruct the Governor of the Province in question to hand the Japanese Consul an official letter of apology,—with indemnity."

Then someone adds: "Why should the Japanese act other than they do? Who is going to stop them?"

"The Red Army and its allies will stop them!"

"The Nanking Government wages war on the Red Army to prevent that."

"For the time being only. Wait. The time will come when it can no longer do that."

"All right," reply my friends, "until then the Japanese can do as they please."

On the Peiping-Tientsin train a short time ago I watched some fifty Japanese and Koreans take possession of a second-class car. They had bags of silver which they were taking out of China. They were not "smuggling" as the press likes to say; they were quite openly taking it out just as they quite openly bring in "smuggled" goods. Chinese coolies had carried the silver onto the train for them, and the armed guards on the car steps had stepped aside politely and allowed them all to pass. Inside, the Chinese conductor opened the compartment doors for them, bowed and smiled a welcome. Later this conductor went through the car again, opened the compartment doors, bowed and smiled and passed on. But when he came to me, he asked for my ticket. He bowed to the Japanese and Koreans in my compartment, smiled, but did not dare ask them for their tickets. In fury, I said to him: "Shame! Shame!"

In my anger I followed him into the corridor and down the car, watching him welcome these gangsters. "Shame on you, a Chinese worker!" I kept saying. He kept his head turned from me, but continued his degradation. The Japanese and Korean gangsters did not even notice him, but took his servility as their right.

Better that a people disappear from the face of the earth than accept such a fate as this. Better that individual Chinese revolt and die on the spot, rather than endure this. That which makes them men is gone. After that, existence has no meaning.

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I was passing the Japanese Embassy in Peiping. At the entrance stood one lone Japanese soldier, with fixed gun. The gate opened and Chinese workers, apparently leaving work for the day, passed from the Embassy grounds into the street. They walked single-file, and as they passed this Japanese soldier, they halted, removed their hats, and bowed to the earth. The Japanese soldier stared before him and appeared not even to notice them. A whole line of some twenty Chinese workers passed, bowing to the earth, hats in hand.

It seemed to me that this was worse than death. Chinese workers, once organized, strong and proud, have been beaten down by the Chinese ruling class until they are today like worms before a single Japanese. Their dignity as men is gone.

"Rather death than this!" I protest to others.

"They must think of their families," people reply.

"Families—why should Chinese families live to exist in slavery?"

"If they refuse to bow, that Japanese would stick his bayonet through them."

"Good—rather that, than this degradation."

"What do you expect of the Chinese common people? For generations their own rulers have treated them exactly as the Japanese treat them today. They have robbed them, looted them, beaten them, killed them, used them as nothing but creatures to make money for them. Now, suddenly, you expect these Chinese to act like men before a foreign invasion."

Yet the Chinese people do struggle, are not slaves. Else why does the Nanking Government pass Special Emergency Laws against the national liberation movement, wage war on the Red Army, and form an Anti-Red Pact with the Japanese invaders? Why does the Japanese Army hesitate to occupy all China? Not from fear of the Chinese ruling class—but from fear of the Chinese people under the influence of the Communists. That and that alone holds them back. But the Japanese have no fear of the Chinese rulers today. Every time the Japanese ambassador, or some petty Japanese official calls on the Nanking Minister of Foreign Affairs, this latter gentleman gets diaorrhea.

The Japanese have killed another of their own countrymen in China. This is the third such murder in recent months and two of them have been in Shanghai. The men killed are all insignificant, unimportant men. The murderers are said by the Japanese to be Chinese, yet no Chinese has been captured.

Everyone knows the Japanese order these killings, that they may use them to exert new pressure on the Nanking Government. Perhaps to get new secret agreements signed. Perhaps to force the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Hopei Province in the North, to get the "right" to station troops in Shantung Province and to take over that Province, to get new economic concessions, or to take over Shanghai. Even now the Japanese use these killings to police the International Settlement of Shanghai. Squads of Japanese marines, armed to the teeth, patrol Shanghai streets where no Japanese live. The British Consul-General of Shanghai aids them in every way. The Germans aid them. The other foreigners bow to them and remark fatalistically that soon the Japanese will take over and run the International Settlement. And with this, they will control the wealth of the Yangtze Valley, and the source of income of the Nanking Government which is and always has been but the tail to this citadel of Far Eastern colonial reaction.

China is sinking—sinking not only physically, but morally, spiritually. Every Chinese under the influence of the Nanking Government is terrified by the Japanese, degraded, servile. Every Chinese under the influence of the Communists, of the Red Army, is filled with contempt and bitter hatred for Nanking and Japan and all their ways.

Happy Birthday

JOSEPH BRIDGES

ALBERT woke up, stretched, yawned and looked at the clock. It was 10:30. After a minute he put on his bathrobe and went into the kitchen.

His mother was peeling potatoes. "Good morning," she said smiling. He said, "Good morning," set the bread in the toaster, and fixed the orange juice.

"Happy birthday," his mother said.

Albert put coffee into the percolator. "What?" He grinned. "Oh yes. Thanks."

"My little boy is twenty-two." She patted him on the back. "A great big man."

"That's right."

"I haven't been able to get you anything, but I'm baking a cake for dinner and I'll give you a little check next week."

"It doesn't make any difference," Albert replied absently. Sitting in the sunlight, he ate his breakfast and read the *Literary Digest*. He felt weak and stuffy: he had slept too long. Pouring a second cup of pale coffee, he remarked, "The *Digest* is getting punk. No pep."

"I don't like it much either," his mother answered. "But Uncle Ralph gave us the subscription and it keeps coming." He turned the page and read "The Lexicographer's Easy Chair". "Sometimes the poetry page is good," she added.

Albert lighted a cigarette. He burned his hand on the toaster, and yanked the cord out. He threw the

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magazine across the table. "The whole damn thing's behind the times!"

When he had finished the cigarette he went into the bathroom, shaved, and dressed. Returning to the kitchen he kissed his mother on the neck and asked cheerily, "Any errands today?"

"I need some celery, about three bunches. You'll find some change in my purse."

"Three bunches of celery." As he went through the door he heard her say, "And Albert, don't you see Mr. Arthur today?"

"No, Thursday," he mumbled over his shoulder.

In the front room he stopped, looking out the window. Leota Perkins had come out of her house and was walking past, toward town. She was wearing a white dress with big red polka-dots, cut low in the back to show her rich skin. As she glanced briefly across the street, Albert saw her large eyes, strong features, and the contour of her rounded breasts. At the corner she waited for a car to pass. She seemed to be humming and keeping time with her foot.

When she had got out of sight Albert went out and followed her up the hill. The glaring sunlight dazzled him, it was getting hot, and he realized with surprise that spring was about over. The grass was thick and high and the trees were full-leaved. Yesterday in the country, he remembered, corn was sprouting in the fields.

He crossed the courthouse lawn, on the way to the A. and P. At school now Harry would be sitting in front of the library, chewing grass-blades, and the upperclassmen would be strolling up and down with the coeds.

Albert went to three stores buying celery. The best price was at Kroger's, three bunches for a dime, and he bought there. Coming back he stopped in the drugstore to get cigarettes and met Joe Thornburg. They drank a cup of coffee together and talked about friends from college. As they walked down the street Joe asked: "You been reading about this general strike in Ohio? They're going pretty far over there."

"Christ almighty, I'm for 'em," Albert said. "Let 'em strike."

Joe shook his head. Frowning, he muttered, "Well, I don't know."

At home Albert took the celery into the kitchen. His mother was washing dishes. "Any mail?" Albert asked, laying the package on the table.

"No mail."

"Guess I'll write a letter. Have you got a stamp?"

She sighed. "I think you'll find some in the desk drawer."

He went into the front room and wrote a letter of application for a job to Mr. Frank Watkins, President and Publisher, *The Gazette,* Moline, Illinois. "Dear Mr. Watkins," he wrote. "My friend John Thompson has informed me that there might be an opening for a reporter on your paper. If so, I wish to apply for the position. I am twenty-two years of age and a graduate of Ashley University with a good record in English, which was my major field of study. I have done a great deal of writing, although I have been unable to get located since graduation, and so am experienced only in college journalism. However, I am willing to work hard and am sure I could make good. I would enjoy living in Moline, as I have many friends near there." He made a list of his references, hesitated a moment, and added: "Since I want very much to get started, salary is of secondary importance."

He typed a neat copy of the letter and put it in an envelope. Sealing it, he debated whether to write to Elizabeth. Maybe if he took a hard, cold, formal tone she would answer him?

Standing at the door, he gazed out gloomily.

He decided not to write. He looked in the desk drawer for a stamp, but there wasn't any. He looked in his wallet and his mother's purse; then he went through all the drawers of the desk, jerking them out when they stuck.

Albert went into the kitchen, but his mother was on the back porch. There was the celery. "God damn it," he said, and threw it into the sink.

After lunch Albert paced through the house and finally went out, saying, "I've got to mail a letter." From the postoffice he wandered over to the library. He got Shaw's *The Apple Cart* from the stacks and sat reading it, glancing up now and then at the women and girls.

When he had finished the preface and the first act he put the book back on the shelf and went over to the place where the psychology books were kept. Opening one, he looked up "Sexual Maladjustments" and began to read. It was a chapter he had read before and he looked up "Masturbation".

One of the library girls, curly-haired and wearing a smock, came into the passage. Albert put the book back quickly and took one from the opposite shelf. It turned out to be *God and Caesar,* by Garrison Owen. He pretended to read it and watched the girl. What would happen if he grabbed her, back there in the stacks?

She was there several minutes and Albert kept looking sideways at her, but he did not have the nerve even to say anything. When she had gone he got the Shaw book and went into the reading room again. It was clean and pleasant in the room, and the people were quiet.

He finished the play and went out, walking down Main Street toward the Bijou Theatre. It would be good to be like Shaw, living in a city, going to plays all the time, and working hard. He saw himself in New York, the American Shaw, probably with Communist instead of Fabian Socialist ideas, a vegetarian non-smoker dressed in health clothes, logical and ruthless.

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He went into the drugstore and lighted a cigarette at the cigar counter. None of his friends were there—only the high-school crowd. Feeling self-conscious, he spoke feebly to one of Harry's girls and left.

The movie looked good—Leslie Howard in *Of Human Bondage*. Albert started toward the window. But sticking his hand in his pocket, he realized that he had no money and turned away.

He walked slowly up the street. He would get money from his mother and see the movie later. At the corner he met Jim Morgan and they stood talking. It was four-thirty, the factories were out, and the streets were crowded.

"Well, what do you know?" Albert said.

Jim answered with bravado, out of the corner of his thin mouth. "Not a thing, pal, not a thing. What do you know?"

Albert did not reply, but spat into the street. A short swarthy man came up to them, holding out a red box. "Any safeties today, gentlemen, fifty a dozen?"

"What the hell for?" Albert asked. Jim burst into a shrill laugh, looking admiringly at Albert. He grabbed Albert's elbow and said, "Come on, that calls for a beer."

"I can't, I'm broke," Albert said glumly.

"I'll stake you."

"I've got to get home," Albert said. "Maybe I'll see you tonight, what's up?"

"Seven-thirty, right here. Play a little pool. We'll be seeing you?"

"Maybe," Albert said, and went home, feeling tired.

Emily Baxter, Mrs. Tom Cates and Ella Netters were in the front room smoking and talking with his mother. Albert said hello and sat in the corner, reading Van Gogh's life. They talked about high school politics. Albert listened for a while and then took his book out on the porch.

"You got two letters," his mother said sweetly, coming after him and handing them to him.

Albert said "Thanks" and glanced at them. One was from an insurance company. He opened it first, read the headings: Independent at Sixty!, crumpled it up, and tossed it in the yard.

The other letter was from Jerry. After all these months he had got a job as assistant manager of a chain clothing store. It wasn't exactly a fellowship in philosophy, but it sure felt good to have some dough coming in once more. He was going to stick with this company, work hard, get transferred to Chicago and rise in the world, and as for dear old Ashley, he was going to wrap his Phi Beta Kappa key in his diploma and send it to Prexy telling him where to shove it. By god he had walked around like a god damned tramp long enough, reading Plato. Now he was going after the cash.

Albert put the letter into his shirt pocket, thinking that Jerry had turned pretty sour. He wondered if Jerry and Ruth Sawyer would get married now.

He braced his feet on the railing, tilted his chair back, and smoked. Why hadn't Elizabeth written? Maybe he had been too stern with her. At Ashley in the spring, he thought, it would be hellish tiresome to have somebody a hundred miles away bawling you out. Perhaps he should write her courteously and kindly, emphasizing that he wanted her to live her life to the full?

He decided against it. The paper boy came by whistling, and the evening paper banged on the porch. Albert opened it and read until dinnertime.

At dinner he asked his mother: "Do you have any change?"

"How much do you need?"

"A dollar."

Handing it to him, she said, "I suppose you're going to spend it on that girl across the street."

He sneered. "No, I'm buying General Motors stock."

"I don't know what you see in that girl," she said meekly.

"Pleasant company."

"Or rather I *do* know what you see—"

He shoved his chair back and jumped up. "Who gives a damn! Can I have a dollar or can't I!"

"I don't care," she wailed.

To comfort her he dried the dishes. Then he put the dollar in his pocket and went out on the porch. Leota was sitting in the swing. Albert waved to her.

Some boys were knocking out flies and grounders on the vacant lot. When the ball rolled into the street he got it, threw it back, and went on across.

"Hello!" she called, as he approached. "Won't you come up?" She moved over in the swing, making room for him.

"Were you doing something?"

"Just reading a story in the *Cosmopolitan*. But it's too dark now."

"Nice night."

"Swell."

They swung lightly. The first few stars were showing in the gray path of sky between the tall trees. They heard the yelling boys, and down the street the racket of a flock of blackbirds. All the people were on the porches or in the yards sprinkling the grass.

Albert felt good. Leota told a boring story about her work in the grocery store. It reminded him of one about his sophomore year at college.

When he had finished they sat breathing the cool air and thinking their own thoughts. Suddenly Albert said: "Man, that has killed god and love in order to be free!"

"What?" she asked.

He repeated slowly. "It's a kind of a quotation," he added.

She looked down. "Let's don't talk of all that. I

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never think about such things, it makes me uneasy."

"In what way?"

She laughed. "I don't know, in my stomach."

Albert shifted away, remembering Elizabeth. He would never get her back, he thought: their love affair was over. He smiled ironically and said, "O.K., baby."

The girl sang a popular song. She slipped her warm hand casually into his. Sitting there smelling the flowers, resting his arm on the girl's leg, Albert thought it was pretty fine. Maybe tonight she would give in. It was dark, the street light came on, and he said, "Let's go out in the back yard."

"I can't tonight."

"Why not?" he complained.

"We're going over to my brother's." Looking in his eyes, she said, "Don't be mad, Albert, we'll go there tomorrow."

"All right," Albert answered. He sat forward in the swing, restless and absent-minded. Finally he said, "See you later," and left, walking toward town.

Albert sauntered down towards the poolroom. Jim Morgan, Bud Hays and Sid Parker were playing a game of snooker. They got into the next game. Bud won twice in a row, it took too much skill for Albert and he was nervous. He was fourth and then fifth. At last he said, "It's too god damn hot to play pool, let's go drink some beer."

Spread across the sidewalk they strolled north, speaking rudely to the girls, telling dirty jokes, and talking about jobs. Bud took the lead, swaggering. He gave his trick laugh as they passed the drugstore. At Kamm's the others followed him single-file through the crowd to the last table.

A new fellow from Frankville came up and spoke to Jim. Jim introduced him and the four of them drank a round together. "Work at the Corp?" Sid asked him.

"When I work," the other laughed. "We got laid off today till July first."

Jim and his friend went up in front with a silly gang who were kidding the singers, trying to make dates with them. Albert and Sid drank another beer. Sid talked morosely, a surly look on his brown face. "What in hell's ahead of us?" he asked. "If we could get out of this god damned town and start fresh, then we might have a chance. But what chance have we got in this town where we grew up and everybody's sick of seeing our faces?"

Albert felt better—he was getting a little tight. He began to talk about Elizabeth, calling her "a woman I knew." Jim came back with a spiked coke in his hand and announced that those other two sons of bitches had left. Logan the three-card-monte artist sat at their table and shuffled the cards, but Sid told him "No dice" and he went away. A young blonde girl, staggering toward the woman's room, knocked a glass on the floor. It broke, and Nick the waiter came over and told the high-school girls to quiet down or get out. One of the entertainers played the accordion and the other one sang *Stardust.*

Pretty soon they had run out of money, and the party broke up. Albert and Jim walked home together, saying nothing. Albert noticed that Jim was wearing the same suit he had four years ago, patched in the seat of the pants. Holding his skinny head defiantly back, Jim sang a tune, hoarsely and without feeling.

At the corner they stood awkwardly, hesitating whether to go home or not. At last Jim said, "Remember when we used to go out to Aunt Kate's for sugar alky every Sunday afternoon? I was sixteen." He stared vacantly into the dark, shook his head and remarked sadly, "Them were the days!" Turning away, he called back: "Fight 'em!"

"So long," Albert said, and went down the street. In front of the house he stopped. There was a light in Leota's bedroom. He crossed and knocked on the window. She was getting ready for bed, wearing a pink negligée. Seeing him, she formed the words: "Go to the door."

In the doorway he put his arms around her and they began kissing. After a while he pulled her onto the porch. "Let's go out in back."

"No, I'll catch cold," she said, smiling. "You bad boy."

They went into the back yard and lay on a piece of canvas. The girl didn't resist very much. When they had finished, she began to cry.

"What's the matter?" Albert said.

"Nothing. I think I love you."

They said goodnight and Albert went home. He pulled his mother's door carefully shut, walked softly into the front room, and sat at the desk. For a long time he sat thinking. Then he began to write a letter to Elizabeth.

"Dearest," he wrote. "Well, here is another message from hell. Sorry to keep reminding you of my useless existence, but the impulse strikes me and as you know too well I was never one for stifling the impulse. So we can throw this too in the pot and see what comes out.

"The worst of it is that I hate this sort of thing. Here am I, a modern man, who does not believe in god, the soul, marriage or even love. We know that man is man, woman is woman, and sex is an animal need. My conduct is unthinkable in one of the enlightened era, who has read Freud and Havelock Ellis.

"It's ironical—what I want to do is to think and talk in scientific terms, read the newspapers, study psychology and political writings—and instead I keep thinking about you—"

Albert tore the letter up and threw the pieces into the wastebasket. Turning out the light, he stood in front of the window and stared at Leota in her room. A train whistled. He heard the clock ticking.

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